

# AN AFFORDABLE ATLANTA

MAKING ATLANTA MORE SUSTAINABLE, EQUITABLE, AND INCLUSIVE

## STATE OF HOMELESSNESS

An introduction to the current situation of homelessness in Atlanta. A review of the available shelters and affordable housing options to lower income individuals.

## INTERVIEWS AND OBSERVATIONS

An informal interview process of stakeholders who are homeless or work with homeless individuals. A formal interview process with those directly involved in the creation of affordable housing options to all Atlantans.

## STRATEGIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

A review of innovative design techniques that people are employing to create affordable housing. An investigation of zoning opportunities and community development.

## COOPER STREET DESIGN PROPOSAL

An evaluation of a potential site on publicly owned land that can have a major impact within the area. Finding a creative solution through the incorporation of research, recommendation, and experience.



<https://apnews.com/20e2d63e499e4015b6282bbe89fe9c8f/Atlanta-homeless-wary-as-city-closes-its-last-resort-shelter>

VISION

To make housing available to all Atlantans that is non-discriminatory, diverse, inclusive, and promotes economic opportunity. This paper serves to investigate the lowest income earning individuals to achieve the following objectives:

- **Humanize homelessness and reduce discrimination**
- **Encourage public participation and the coordination of resources**
- **Strategize development solutions to affordable housing options**

*“Housing is unconditional, you do not need to solve your problems before you get a home. Instead a home should be the secure foundation that makes it easier to solve your problems” - Juha Kaakinen, CEO of the Y-Foundation*

CONTENT OVERVIEW

The content of this document is a working guide that assesses the current situation of homelessness through quantitative **statistics**, qualitative interviews with **stakeholders**, and real time **strategies**.

The research is a foundation for understanding the public, private, and community perspectives on homelessness.

The site analysis of Cooper Street SW is an opportunity to apply the lessons learned from the initial research and a means of maximizing the potential of publicly owned land to serve its community.

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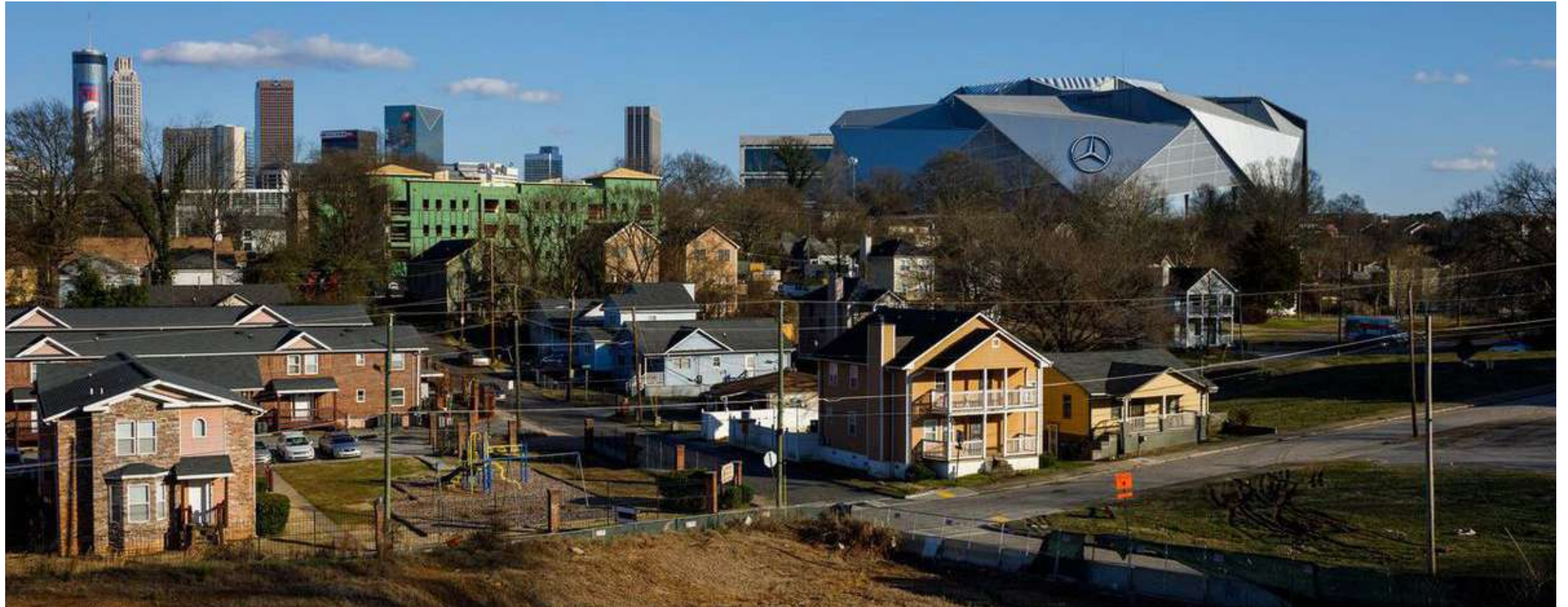
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## PART ONE

# IDENTIFYING KEY CONCEPTS

*An Affordable Atlanta* ■ 4



<https://atlanta.curbed.com/atlanta-photo-essays/2019/1/31/18201601/super-bowl-lviii-atlanta-gentrification-poverty-blank>



## STATE OF HOMELESSNESS

*An introduction to the problem*

Since the 2008 housing recession, American cities have been undergoing a reversal period where people who once fled the city center are now drawn to its alluring qualities. The period of “white flight” that decentralized our urban cores for a generation of boomers to find a house with a white picket fence to start a family, has been replaced by the millennial who wants a one bedroom \$1400 studio apartment, no kids, and works in a shared spaced with other digital share croppers.

For the first time, our suburbs have shown higher poverty rates than our cities (Florida 2019). Malls and large commercial properties have been abandoned due to online competition by major coporations including: Amazon, Alibaba, and JD.com (Gunter 2017). Urban

decay has started to spread into the suburbs while cities have experienced a rather positive period of revitalization (Dunham-Jones 2008). The result has been a flourishing market for real estate developers to focus on housing construction for a high-cost demand in our major cities. With little regulations against the units being produced and their resale value, rental rates have skyrocketed and only the people with money have seen a great period of prosperity. In lieu of these investments, the poorer areas of our cities have experienced gentrification, and the urban revitalization that was employed to try social inequity, has instead driven long-term residents out of their communities by higher prices. Culture, artistry, and history that made these communities attractive are being lost behind developer greed and political complicity.

*People are becoming increasingly aware of the motives of the principal beneficiaries of many design and development initiatives (Dobbins 2009, 6)*

Atlanta is among the most vulnerable of any rapidly growing metropolitan region because of its developer friendly regulations that encourage rapid renewal, and its construction of large, city-wide infrastructural projects like the Beltline. Consequently, in Atlanta, there is a growing mismatch between housing costs, wages, and income. While Atlanta’s economy has grown over the last decade, wages have not kept pace with rising rents. Between 2000 and 2017, Atlanta’s median rent increased by over 70%, but the median income only increased by 48% (One Atlanta, 2019). More importantly, over 27% of households still earned less than \$25,000 annually showing a growing gap

*“History shows that societies which tolerate vast differences in wealth feed resentments and reduce solidarity and actually grow more slowly. And when economic power is concentrated in the hands of the few, history also shows that political power is sure to follow — and that dynamic eats away at democracy.”*  
*–Barack Obama*

between what people can afford versus what people are making. With luxury housing being the main focus of developers, the percentage of income dedicated to housing costs greatly increased for Atlantans and in 2016, nearly half

were considered housing-cost burdened. The federal government suggests that households should spend no more than 30% of their income on housing and utilities to not be considered burdened. The gini coefficient, which measures income inequality, scores a 0 to those cities who have achieved absolute equality and a 1 to cities that have complete inequality. It should come as no surprise that Atlanta has been called the "inequality capital" having maintained a Gini coefficient of 0.57 for several years (Lu 2019). This year, Atlanta ranks last amongst cities with populations greater than 250,000.

Equally important, as the housing costs have increased and the credit constraints have risen in Atlanta, the homeownership rates for communities of color and low-income residents have declined. Important to note, homeownership is one of the primary sources of inherited wealth between generations which allows lower income individuals to take steps to get out of extreme poverty. Between 2010 and 2016, there was a 15% decline in homeownership rates for all households in Atlanta earning less than \$100,000 (One Atlanta, 2019). The South of the City has a larger population of people of color and a higher percentage of people paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs than other areas in Atlanta. More than 70% of renting households in the south and west

sides of Atlanta were paying more than 30% of their income towards rent, rather in the north, less than 10% of renting households were rent burdened. In 2015, 22% of renting households in Fulton County received eviction notices, a high percentage of which were levied against Atlanta’s south and westside neighborhoods (Pendered 2017). Above all else, the quality of life between the North and South areas of Atlanta has had an increasing disparity attributed to the flow of money creating better schools, more greenspaces, additional jobs, and improved living standards for those that can afford it. For those that cannot afford it, like those living in Southside Atlanta, the people live on average 13 years shorter than those who live in the Northside (One Atlanta, 2019). If the job of architects, planners, and city employees is to ensure the life safety and well-being of the constituents we serve in providing a set of standards, we are doing a poor job of it. However, the purpose of this paper is not show what a bang-up job we are doing as professionals in solving our affordable housing crisis. The purpose of this paper is to find creative solutions to the affordable housing crisis by starting with those who are the most in need; those who are homeless.

What is the problem? The problem is that we cannot produce enough affordable units to satisfy the

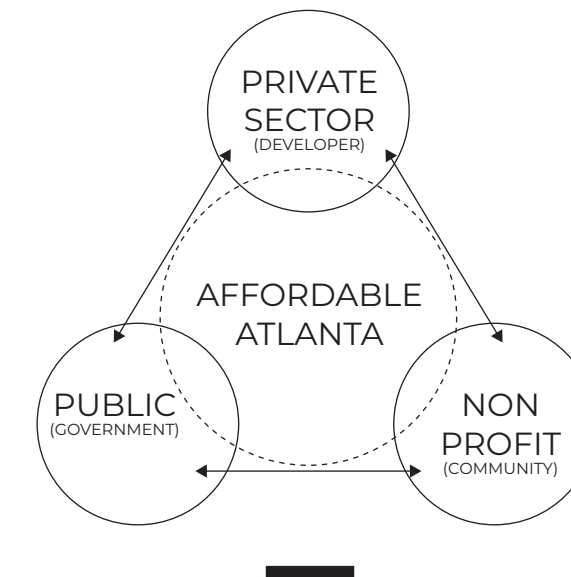
general population let alone provide units that will fulfill the needs of our homeless individuals. It is not that we do not have the money to provide affordable housing. It is a matter of **effective distribution of funds**, of having **strong public and private sector relationships**, and of having a **sense of urgency**. The pace at which our cities are growing largely outweighs their current affordable housing inventory. The Gini coefficient is one quantitative measure we can employ to drive the need for change and track its progress. If used in conjunction with our

*“No two leaves are alike, and yet there is no antagonism between them or between the branches on which they grow”*  
*–M. K. Gandhi*

qualitative findings through daily encounters and experience, we can stop the continued cycle of homelessness and social inequity that many people have come to accept with a highly developed city. This “big city” mentality has to change so that people are not turning a blind eye to their fellow neighbor and environment. Social progress comes with understanding that we are a reflection our city and at that level we are all equal. Once we can take pride in our city and its appearance, we can start to create change.

What is the solution? There is no simple solution to the multitude of problems that comes with our cities. For every solution we create there will always be a complaint that we could have served a better purpose. However, what we can begin to identify is what are positive and what are negative solutions. The positive solutions are those that can be presented immediately and can happen at a small-scale. These incremental changes can be affordable housing, main street improvements, or a new community space. Positive projects preserve neighborhoods for their cultural and historical value. They maintain legacy homeowners and improve the quality of life through community-based design.

The negative solutions are those that happen over the course of several years at the regional scale. These negative solutions are influenced by big spending campaigns that see gentrification and displacement as a necessary and unavoidable evil. Examples of these changes include the Beltline and the Gulch project, a form of top-down planning. This paper is not aimed at choosing sides to who is right and who is wrong. Rather, the objective is highlighting the need and encouraging the collaboration of three spheres of influence in creating a more attractive and affordable city. These influences include: the private, public, and non-profit sectors.



*How do we leverage the private, public, and nonprofit sectors in creating a more Affordable Atlanta?*

## STATE OF HOMELESSNESS

*The Current Situation | Georgia versus United States*

The current situation of homelessness is an overall decline in the unsheltered population across the United States since the government began recording in 2007. Point in Time is a count that the Department for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) coordinates with local and state Continuum of Care agencies to document the homeless situation in the United States. This count takes place on a single night, and is used to help determine Continuum of Care funding and to track progress in the ending of homelessness. As of January 2020, the United States had approximately 568,000 people experiencing homelessness, of which, one third (37%) were in unsheltered locations (HUD 2019). This was a 3% increase from last year and leaned more

on increasing numbers on the West Coast. In particular, **California has more than half 53% or 108,432 unsheltered homeless persons. This amount is significantly higher than Georgia's estimated 3,880 unsheltered persons.** Georgia has reduced its' persons experiencing homelessness by 9,196 which is a 47.4% reduction since 2010 (HUD 2019). Reference to this data can be found in the Appendix, Figure 1. *If Georgia has less homelessness than most of the United States, why should we worry about addressing it?*

The percentage of California's total population that are unsheltered homeless is 0.27% versus Georgia's 0.037%. Both percentages seem insignificant compared to the total population. However, looking more closely at major urban areas,

one begins to see the problem. Homelessness congregates around our economic centers, as a result of a lack of affordable housing, failed urban housing projects, the need for employment and institutional assistance, amongst other reasons.

This is especially problematic in Georgia where the state is mainly rural land with high urban concentrations surrounding the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Urban cores are hot spots for homelessness where encampments become increasingly more visible. Conversely, rural homelessness is what is referred to as "hidden homelessness" and is harder to record than in urban areas (HUD 2019). This creates an underrepresentation of persons experiencing homelessness. To justify our need to address homelessness in our urban areas, taking the total homeless persons in Atlanta and dividing by the total population, shows that approximately 6.4% individuals are without a home. This number becomes increasingly more prevalent if it were to be maintained through an economic recession. With recent events resulting from COVID-19, statistics will truly be put to the test. Understanding these cycles can help us make predictions on future estimations, but can also make us more vulnerable to inaccuracies in the overall count of homeless individuals.

### ATLANTA, GA



- 3076 homeless on a given night
- 65.1 homeless per 10,000 people in general population

### SACRAMENTO, CA



- 3621 homeless on a given night
- 23.7 homeless per 10,000 people in general population

<https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/>

### Major Trends

- **Overall homelessness is declining**
- **Technologies for recording homelessness are improving**
- **There are difficulties tracking homelessness in more rural areas**
- **There are higher concentrations of homelessness in a city's urban core**

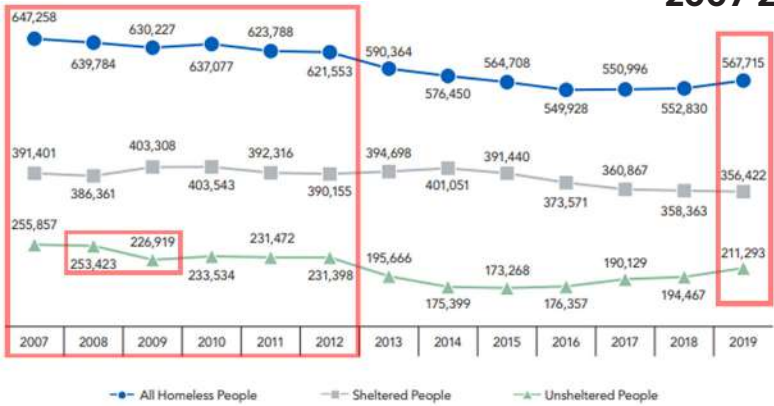
*“With partnerships among the federal government, states, localities, the faith community, and the private sector, together we can join in leading all individuals and families to the right type and level of support to move out of homelessness and into a better life. ” – Dr. Benjamin S. Carson Sr., Secretary U.S. Dep. of HUD*



Data Reliability

If we were to analyze some of the released counts on homelessness from the AHAR, some numbers just do not seem to add up while others seem fairly on point. There are three key statistics worth noting from the adjacent diagram. Notice during the housing recession there is still a steady decline of homelessness over time. One would be aimed to believe that with the economy in turmoil we would see a spike somewhere between 2007-2012. Equally important, between the 2008-2009 years there was a 30,000 person drop off in the unsheltered homeless population. Research showed that this number can be attributed to one of the coldest days in recent winters. Extreme colds and heavy rain lead to poor counts for the unsheltered populations. Lastly, while the economy has been so great the past couple of years with an all-time unemployment low, why has the homeless count increased? I actually believe this is to be the most accurate statistic to date. It was one of the hottest winter days, minimum rain throughout the country, and volunteers were starting to switch over to digital documentation. I firmly believe that the numbers will get increasingly better as our cities begin to adopt new technologies to help volunteers document information more accurately.

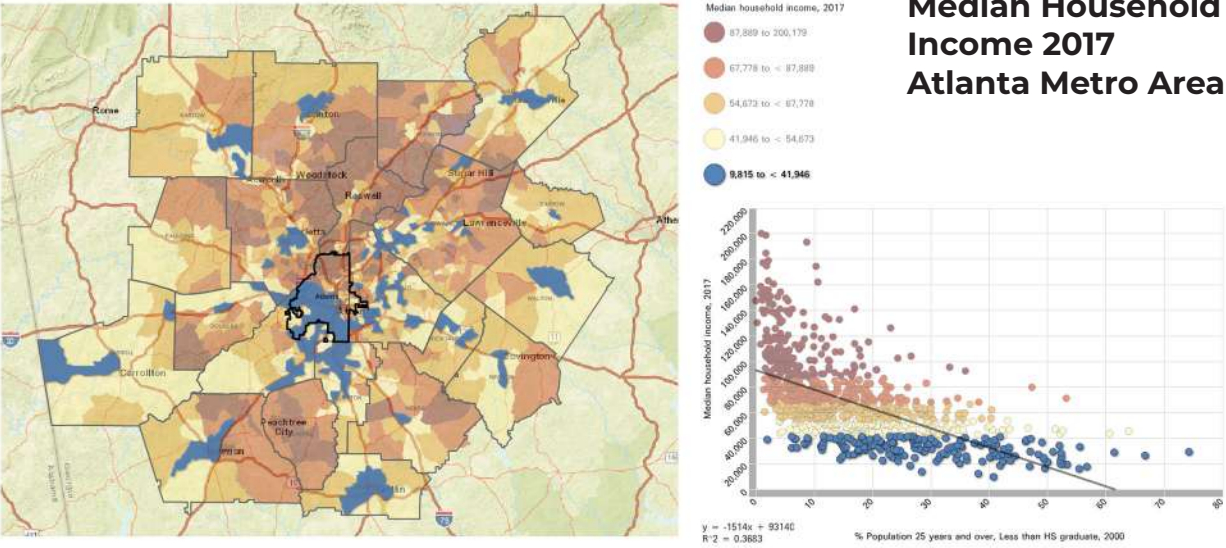
PIT Estimates of People Experiencing Homelessness 2007-2019



Data acquired from the 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR)

Talking to people working in the field versus the people behind the screen working the diagrams from collected statistics, there is a discrepancy in what the data shows and what the case workers experience. While data has showed a steady decline in homelessness, case workers have noted an increased severity of the unsheltered populations. Neyaunte Stallings, a Homeless Coordinator and Community Outreach Specialist at the City of Atlanta noted, “the Homeless migrate and the numbers we collect are only half of what is actually out there sleeping in the woods and in abandoned buildings. In some cases, we are counting the same people twice who simply want a gift card, and in other cases we simply cannot find them because they do want to be.”

Median Household Income 2017 Atlanta Metro Area



2017 Census Data - Neighborhood Nexus

While taking into account the limitations of technologies, they still provide us illustrations that help visualize larger picture trends in our major urban areas. Above, is a map displaying the Median Household Income for the Atlanta Metro Area highlighting the lowest income earners between \$9,000 and \$42,000 in blue. Note, the 60% Area Median Income(AMI) for a household in the Atlanta MSA is approximately 49,620 for a four person family (Invest Atlanta 2020). In the Atlanta Area, there is an apparent distribution of lower income earners in the South, and in the larger MSA there appears to be lower income earners near major highways. Highways are where we see both homeless

individuals and cheaper rental rates due to noise pollution. The scatter plot takes the Median household income for the MSA and displays the percentage of the population 25 years and over that have obtained less than a high school degree. The negative correlation indicates a downward trend in the level of education and the amount of income earned. As we consider these factors, we can note the need to provide the necessary resources and amenities needed to help reduce income inequality. This is the first step in reducing social inequity for both homeless individuals and lower income workers. Additional services will be needed to assist chronically homeless persons in their rehabilitation process.

# STATE OF HOMELESSNESS

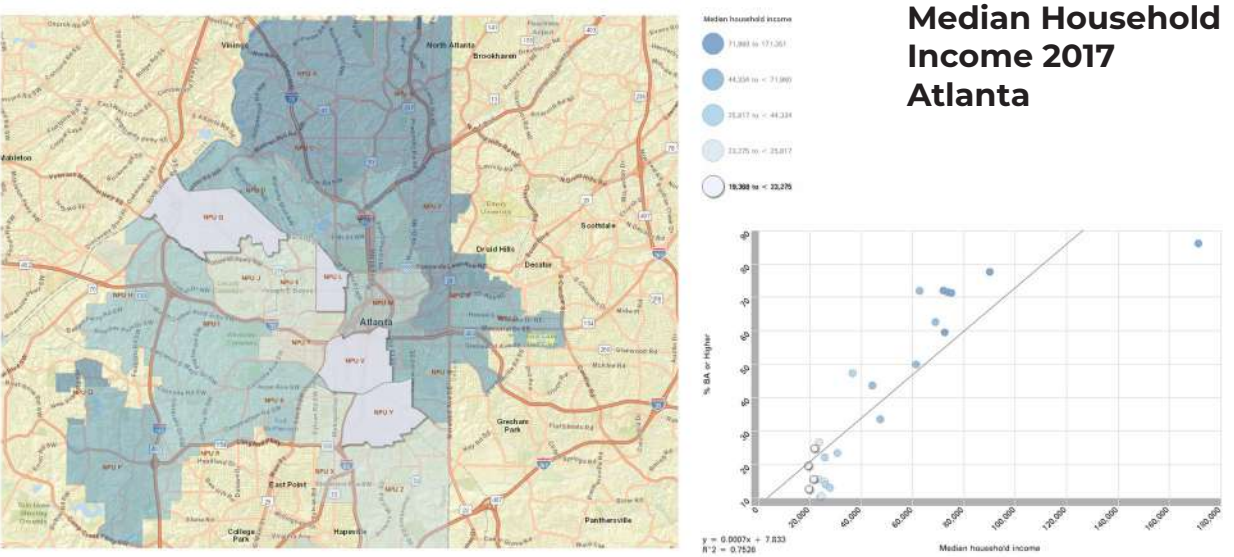
The Current Situation | Atlanta

Atlanta saw a slight increase in homelessness in 2019 based on the Point in Time survey on January 22, 2019. While the total number was marked at 3,217 homeless, which was a 5% increase from 2018, the homeless population had decreased by 25% since 2015 which totaled 4,317 (Partners For Home 2019). One of the classifications that PIT looks at is chronic homelessness\*. Overall, chronic homeless cases decreased by 51% since 2015, but since 2018 Atlanta saw an increase by 12%. Another increase since 2018, the homeless population with HIV/AIDs increase by 67%. All other characteristics saw a decrease since 2018 including: mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence, veterans, and families. The largest unsheltered population were African American males of the age of 40 that have been in and out of homelessness

for the past few years. Reference to this data can be found in the Appendix, Figure 2

The Atlanta Continuum of Care (CoC) covers the entire geography of the city limits which approximates 130 square miles and 242 neighborhoods. Partners for Home is in charge of organizing the Point in time event for the entire area. The limits are split up into subsections and divided amongst the volunteers on the day of the Point in Time. The volunteers are then distributed into teams to go out into the field to record information. The participating homeless individual would be interviewed in return for a gift card. The information given was entirely voluntary and the person could reject any question they felt uncomfortable answering. Partners for Home would be responsible for recording the final entries.

*Chronically Homeless – either a homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more or an individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years that add up cumulatively to at least one year of homelessness (National Alliance 2019)*



2017 Census Data - Neighborhood Nexus

In addition to the homeless situation in Atlanta, there is an affordability issue. The highlighted NPU's evaluate the median household income for the lowest earning individuals in the Atlanta area. The scatter plot is now showing the positive correlation of income earned versus obtaining a Bachelor's degree or higher. Notice the white dots in the corner indicating the four NPU's being at the bottom of the correlation. All four face an issue of equity in both household income and education. Important to note, many of the inclusionary zoning policies which would assist this area are based on MSA data for income rather the Atlanta area. This makes the median income much higher and does not reflect true AMI.

For instance, a developer can base his need for inclusionary zoning or affordable housing (10%) on an AMI that reflects people earning \$40,000 for a family of 4, when in reality they might earn less than \$22,000 in this area.

NPU V will be the focus of the study in the second half of the paper. NPU V provides a unique opportunity for publicly owned land to have a major impact on the community. The current situation is an abundance of poverty and homelessness around the highway system which abuts the property of interest. The goal is to leverage the support of the public, private, and non-profit sectors in creating an essential facility to help this community flourish.





Five Points Site Group 17 - Tracy Woodard and Nick Hess

## STATE OF HOMELESSNESS

*Point in Time 2020*

The Point in Time 2020 occurred from the night of January 27 to the morning of January 28. The following is a recount of the experiences of Group 17 who were responsible for recording South Downtown Atlanta. Group 17's lead was Tracy Woodard, the president of the Mad Housers organization. Tracy, along with her husband Nick Hess, are also case workers that

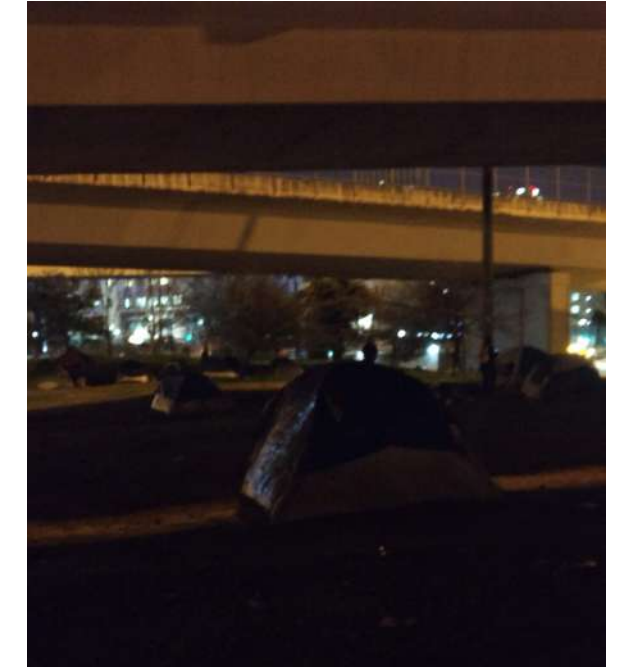
help assist the local homeless populations in finding services and shelter. The dynamic duo wear several occupational hats, but their passion to help the community remains consistent through every job. Their collective experience helped to identify the best locations to find homeless people to interview, generating a better count of the area. The dynamic duo would take us



Gathering for start at Church



South Downtown - Intersection Forsyth and Peachtree



Under I-20 West (2AM)

through back wooded areas where we would shout out to let people know who we were and what we were doing. We would run up the side of the steep highway underpasses to the make-shift shelters at the top to see who was sleeping tonight. We would go off-roading in the transportation van simply to find people hiding out in the parks. All in all, the team stayed out past 2AM and was exceptionally assertive in finding everyone possible to interview.

*"I think the more we lose affordable housing, which seems to be happening every day, the less we'll be able to get a handle on keeping our numbers down, and there's only so much we can do in a crisis response system. Our hands are full with the population now." - Cathryn Marchman, Partners for HOME*

What was unique to this year's count was the 'Counting Us' application which was generated by the City of Atlanta's Public Works department. Counting Us utilizes people's cell phones to generate reports and record precise locations through people's geographic location. There were two sections in the application we would actively use: one was a Homeless survey for the unsheltered which involved an interview process with those willing to participate, the other was an observation tally which pertained to those persons who were unwilling to participate, but we would still make a note of their existence and relevant demographic. The application was a huge step forward in the recording process which in previous years was conducted on clipboards by hand and in the dark. Those sheets would then be typed in to be recorded.





Front of Gateway Center (IAM)

Although there were plenty of unsheltered homeless people out on this particular night, the consensus was that this year was not nearly as bad as it used to be in the past. In an area we might have seen fifteen tents under a highway system, in previous years it might have been well over twice that amount. In some cases, as the night carried on, we had to really hunt for people where in previous years the encampments were much more populated. That is not to say those people are no longer homeless, they may have been somewhere else on the night of the count.

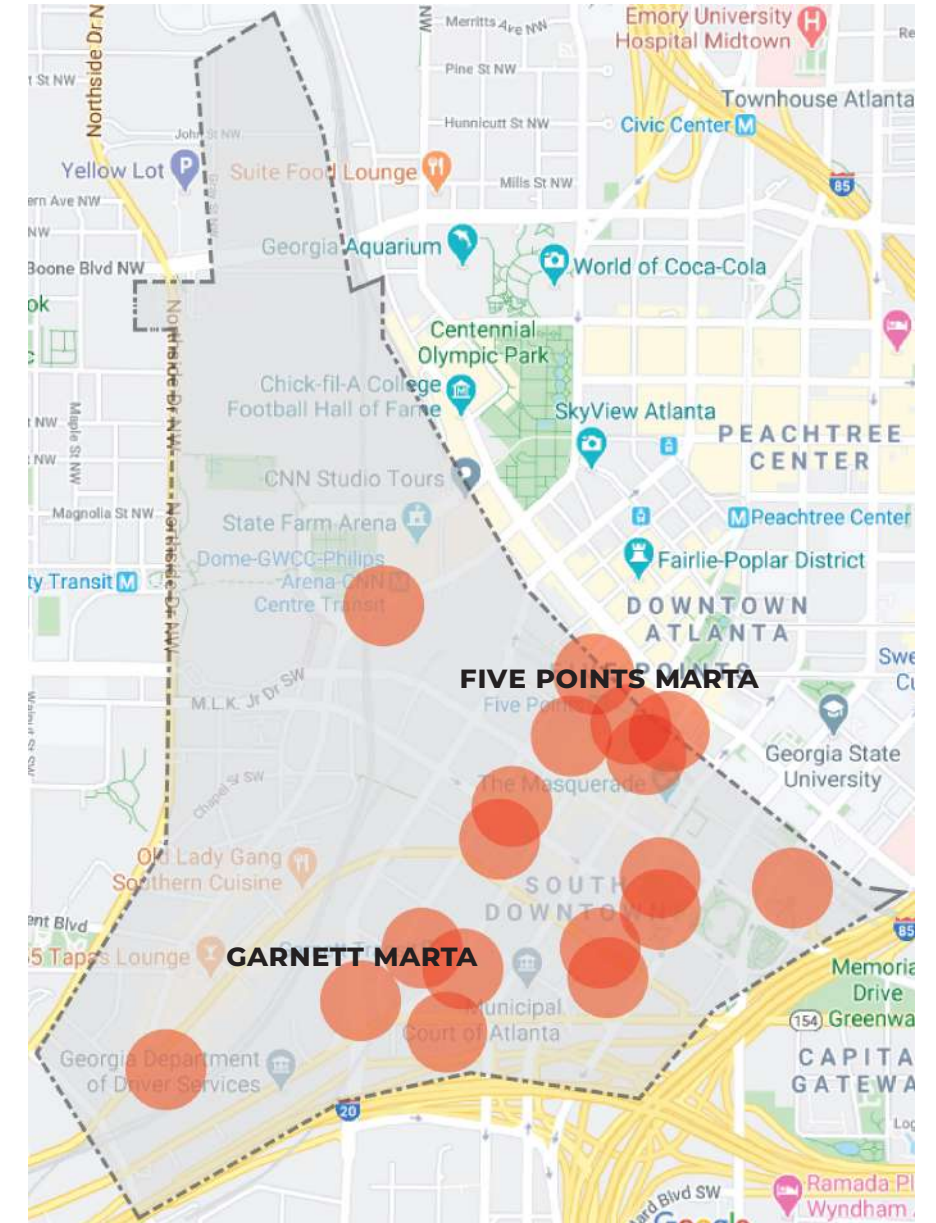
The interview process through the Counting Us application was quite simple to follow. It begins with a disclaimer letting people know who we are and that the information they provide is voluntary. In some cases, it would seem people would simply answer

the questions as quickly as possible so that they could be on their way and receive their gift card. Other interviews were more carefully recording depending on the situation and the person's patience. The survey takes you through a questionnaire starting with the person's name and identifications, their current situation and arrangements, a section on mental and medical conditions, and then a financial portion. For the most part, the questions were well organized, but in some of the subparts to the initial question the information was not as well received. For instance, you would have questions asking about disabilities and credit score where after they would answer the yes/no it would then ask how this has impacted their ability to get off the streets or find work, it just seemed to take it too far and turned the individual off from wanting to continue the survey

because there would be a chain of the same question after each answer. Are you disabled, how has this impacted... Do you have a mental illness, how has this impacted... Only if you say 'don't know,' the question will not continue. How many questions is too much? Reference to this survey can be found in the Appendix, Figure 3.

It was surprisingly easy to approach people on the streets at this time of night. You would anticipate more people trying to avoid a conversation at one in the morning, but the moment they knew about the incentive for a McDonald's gift card people would organize into a line. It does make you question the accuracy of the information provided. I definitely received some weird numbers from people who seemed less interested in the survey and more in the final reward.

All in all, I thoroughly enjoyed the Point in Time count and would recommend people starting out to find a group with experienced members who will help you feel comfortable approaching homeless individuals and to branch out into areas you might not have thought of as safe. No one is out to get you; they are simply just trying to live their life and are happy to offer a conversation if you treat them with respect. The people we were able to interview were incredibly kind and helpful in finding where people were staying nearby who would be interested in the survey. The best guide was always the person who is actively living on the streets and is aware of where everyone else is staying. Those people were highly intelligent, and typically choose to remain homeless because of a serious addiction or social fear that prevents them from wanting to return to society.



South Downtown - Concentration Areas



## INTERVIEWS AND OBSERVATIONS

*The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*

The good, the bad, and the ugly is a series of observations of homelessness in the city of Atlanta that depicts three levels of condition based on the humanity offered by both the homeless individual and the people around them. The goal with this series is to show the range of what exists on the streets through personal observation and reflection. There were several encounters documented over the course of four months, but these nine were the most noteworthy and provide a clear distinction from one another.

People on the street might be living there by choice or by a series of unfortunate events. They could be your neighbor, they could be from out of

town, or they could be homeless for several years. Regardless of the circumstance, their identity should be protected. To maintain anonymity of the individuals, no names or pictures will be shared in this series.

Location still plays a key in influencing the condition observed and creating the setting for the story. There is a red bounding box to indicate the relative position of the individual. The picture series does not depict the time or weather during the informal interview with the individual. The observations were conducted both at night and during the day under varying weather. All of which were documented on the way to or on the way from volunteering at a shelter.



<https://givingcompass.org/article/helping-the-homeless-is-an-art/>

### the GOOD

Where do you find ‘good’ homelessness? Good homelessness is when you do not even realize someone is homeless because their actions speak louder than their appearance. Good homelessness is people just being themselves, living their own life without causing conflicts.

### the BAD

What constitutes ‘bad’ homelessness? Bad homelessness is when people begin to disregard the impact of their actions on the people around them. These are the people that create a bad name for homelessness by simply being disruptive, with no compassion.

### the UGLY

The ‘ugly’ side of homelessness were the few cases that were the most alarming and unexpected circumstances to my experience of homelessness and can be considered anomalies. These were cases where people were so far gone, they were not aware of their surroundings either from being on drugs or simply fatigue. I felt helpless in helping the following individuals, but these were the most extreme situations I encountered on the streets. These moments really shook my core and made me wonder if we could still solve homelessness.

## THE GOOD



Luckie St and Mills St NW



Jett St NW and Vine St NW



James P Brawley and Proctor St NW

The initial observation was just outside of the Salvation Army on Luckie Street. I had parked my car to work the lunch shift and noticed someone had stalled out on the road. Two women, who were hanging outside of the facility, immediately ran out into the middle of the street to help the woman whose car had broken down. They pushed the car out of the way of traffic and I thought that would be it, but they then proceeded to pop the hood open and try to figure out what was wrong with the car. I went over to see if I could help, I keep some tools in my trunk and a jump starter in case I am ever stranded. The older of the two men took my socket wrenches and went to work to try to figure out what the issue was, it seemed the car was going to need a new alternator. We waited around for a tow truck and I got to talk to the two gentlemen who helped out. Their ages were 56 and 34 respectfully, and both were staying at the shelter temporarily. The older gentleman used to be a mechanic before he lost his job and moved out on the streets when things got worse.

The 34-year-old had been going to school for a business degree when he had to take a break to help out a family member. He never went back, and he said depression got the best of him. Regardless of their situation, they went out of their way to help a stranger in a time of need.

*“The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing.”*

*–Albert Einstein*

The second observation was when I was looking at potential properties in Vine City that could be transformed into multifamily properties for Westside Future Fund. I met a squatter in front of a duplex who was immediately alarmed by my presence. I was a little nervous at first, but then we got to talking and I realized he was only concerned we were going to tear down the building with him in it. He said that he could really care less about losing his current place. He explained that he probably changes houses every week or so, it is not difficult for him to find an abandoned property. He also

recognized Westside Future Fund and thought what they were doing was overall beneficial to the community. His reason for why he was still on the streets was a criminal record he had from a long time ago that was making it difficult for him to find a job. In regards to basic needs, he would travel on foot as far as fifteen miles a day just to get a meal or articles of clothing from a shelter. He said there are tips and tricks to getting around with MARTA for free, but for the most part he just walks. I complimented his calf muscles and thanked him for all the information he shared.

The third observation was the result of my own nervousness and insecurity. I was around English Avenue during the middle of the afternoon and had been running in to the rowdy bunch (people offering me drugs) while taking pictures of abandoned properties. On this occasion I ran into a youth gang hanging out behind some buildings and they were not happy with me taking photos. I basically ran back to my car a couple blocks away while one of the teens was following and shouting some profanity at me. I got back to my car, no longer being pursued, and proceeded to lock my keys in the car while I wrote some notes down about the property I was looking at. Once I realized I was locked out of my car the panic set in a little bit and two rugged men

were approaching me in the distance, looking directly at me. I called the locksmith who was 45 minutes out and these men were just smiling at me, now waiting at the corner. Immediate thoughts were, do I walk away from my car and go somewhere else? Should I stay and protect my valuables? The two men wave me over and I sheepishly started a conversation with them. Of course, they were the two nicest homeless men in the world. They had been hanging out at the nearby convenient store and saw me running by in distress. They had come over to see if I needed any help. I told them what I had been up to with my project and what I was running into and we shared a good laugh. There was never a comment about what are you doing in my neighborhood you do not belong here. It was simply, you are welcome to be here and we are happy to have you. If you are uncomfortable in any way, we will be here to make you feel safe. I've run into a lot of conversationalists who will run you around to make a quick buck off you. However, these two men waited until the locksmith arrived and never asked for anything in return.

*“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.”*

*–Kahlil Gibran*



## THE BAD



Forsyth St SW



Memorial Dr SW



Central Ave SW (Atlanta Underground)

Observation four took place across the street of the Greyhound station on Forsyth Street. It was nighttime and there were probably fifteen people congregated around this area. A few of the people had set up a little food stand to sell snacks and beverages. An elderly woman in her 70s and in a wheelchair, started out across the street to the food stand. As she approached the men were making fun of the way she was acting; she had some mannerisms that really made her stand out. I started a conversation to see why she was out by herself so late at night and the problem became apparent. You could tell she was slightly autistic and could not really identify what was happening around her. The greyhound station had turned her away, she was trying to get a ride to where she was staying that night. During the conversation one of the men nearby said do not waste your time with her she is crazy. I was appalled, here is a disabled elderly woman out on the street close to midnight, and no one seems to

care about her situation. She may have had a stroke that caused her current state, she may have family that cannot find her, she may be suffering from Alzheimer's. The lack of compassion people displayed that night was terrible. Fortunately, I was with an experienced case worker, Tomika Talley, that was able to help find her a place for the night to better understand the situation. She was not the only elderly woman out on the street that we met that night.

*“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said,  
people will forget what you did, but people will never  
forget how you made them feel.”*

*–Maya Angelou*

The fifth observation was on Memorial Drive in a lot that sells monthly parking. During the day I see people from City Hall park here because it is cheaper than the neighboring garage. However, at night, this place usually gets about five people using the overhang of the building as a temporary shelter for the night.

On this occasion, I was walking back from volunteering at the Gateway Center at night behind a woman who appeared to have just left work. The group of men saw her walking by herself and started cat calling to try to get her attention. She began to walk at a quicker pace and their taunts started to get louder. That kind of behavior just creates a sense of a lack of safety and cannot be tolerated. I know someone that works for the City that parks in this lot, I would not feel comfortable with her leaving work late at night by herself. It does not create a positive image for the city, and the men were probably only doing it out of boredom to pass time.

Observation Six was off Central Avenue SW behind a staircase. While the homeless individuals in this scenario were not deliberately trying to be disruptive, they indirectly created a situation that reflects poorly on the homeless population and city in general. They were lighting up behind the staircase, this was happening right next to the lower access point to the Atlanta Underground. It was still early in the evening, and there was a mom and her child walking down from the upper level to where they were parked and they saw the whole thing taking place. Out of place and out of sight, but still near enough to cause damage in the public eye. Drugs are never a good look for the City, but this was the

only case where I saw them taking place. There were wooded areas I went into where I would anticipate drug use, but still never directly saw anyone actively using.

*“If the society today allows wrongs to go unchallenged, the  
impression is created that those wrongs have the approval of  
the majority.”*

*–Barbara Jordan*

To turn a blind eye to the urban decay and suffering that happens on our streets is to accept poverty that will always remain. We cannot become complacent with how things are if we are to create change that improves the quality of life for people living in Atlanta. We cannot change who people are, but we can set an example of how they can make a difference even at just a moment in time. If we are able to lift one person out of poverty, they may become the person we need down the road to lift ourselves up. There is a catalyst effect to doing good for others as we want them to do good for us.

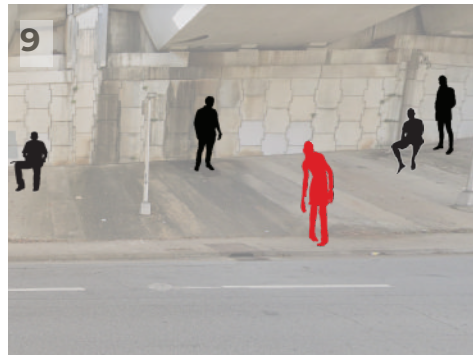
## THE UGLY



Memorial Dr SE and Martin St SE



Marietta St NW and Ted Turner Dr



Pryor St SW underneath I20 West

Observation 7 was during a torrential downpour on my 2 mile walk to the Gateway Center. After crossing Memorial Drive, I noticed a figure laying on the ground next to the streetlight. The man was laying flat on his back with the rain pouring down on his face. His clothing was torn and covered in mud and he was wearing no shoes. He had socks on, but even the socks had holes. The man seemed perfectly relaxed and there was almost a surreal feeling to the moment as the rain kept falling. I asked him if he was alright and if he needed any help, I could walk him to the Gateway Center. He said he did not like that shelter, the security was mean to him and he could not keep up with the curfews. I tried to offer him a meal to get out of the rain, but he refused. The man was perfectly content as he was, he would not even accept my umbrella. What do you do for a man that does not want to be helped?

*“Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself”*  
*–Leo Tolstoy*

Observation 8 took place on one of the coldest nights of the year. It happened about 9:30 pm at night when an Atlanta Hawks game let out. The location was on the corner of Marietta Street and Ted Turner Drive, in front of the parking garage that services the State Bar of Georgia. On the ground was a man that appeared dead laying face down. His pants were pulled down and it was so cold you could visibly see the goosebumps on his buttocks. Rather see if the man was okay, the people leaving the sporting event just went about their business. It was not as if they did not see the man, some people were pointing and laughing, and an Asian couple went as far as to take a picture on their phone. I was able to get the man upright with the help of a good Samaritan nearby who did not like how things

were unfolding. The man was the Reverend of a Church and made a comment about how in this day and age we simply turn a blind eye to this kind of darkness. Earlier that day I had read an article about how homeless people had died in the area from Hyperthermia. If we had not helped would this have been a similar case? I asked a case worker later about the event and what should have been the proper procedure. They said the best option would have been to call the police for public indecency. The police would most likely arrest him for the night to allow him to sober up and would help him find the resources he would need to get better through a deterrence program. It seemed like a harsh analysis to the situation, but it was a realistic option.

The final observation, observation 9, will stay with me the rest of my life. Underneath I-20 on Pryor Street was a man pacing back and forth without a shirt. I had never seen a man that was so emaciated that the wind could probably blow him over. He looked like he could barely stand leaning forward and back as he moved like he would keel over at any moment. You could visibly see every bone in his body, and I was afraid he was going to die. There were some nearby encampments, but no one was really paying him any attention. The person volunteering

with me that day suggested we call 911 and explain the situation. The emergency services were perfectly fine sending out an ambulance understanding this person could probably not front the eventual bills. The paramedics arrived and put the guy on an IV and we continued to the shelter. I never saw him after that day, but I still think about him and hope he is doing better.

The majority of the homeless individuals I encountered on the streets were your everyday ‘good’ homeless living their own life as they saw fit. These people were perfectly willing to have an open conversation with someone who would treat them with respect. It is important to understand the levels that homelessness can take a person because there are extremes beyond our control. There still needs to be a system of services that cater to each person’s needs on top of providing quality shelter.

*“We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty. We must start in our own homes to remedy this kind of poverty.”*  
*–Mother Teresa*



## INTERVIEWS AND OBSERVATIONS

### *Homeless Shelters*

The following part is a review of the conversations that took place between three shelters including: Gateway Center, Salvation Army (Red Shield Services), and City of Refuge. Most of the conversations took place at the Gateway Center where I could have one on ones with clients. The other two shelters the time was spent in food service with minimal client interaction, mainly just talks with other service workers. The information is organized to not specifically identify the shelter the conversation took place, but to provide an overview of the interactions with both homeless clients and employees.

To protect the identity of the employees and homeless clients, their names have been altered. All the shelters

were very particular about the anonymity of the clients and we agreed not to have any visual documentation of the environment.

My responsibilities as a volunteer remained throughout the process which helped build trust towards my intentions for research and my intentions of wanting to assist the process. I was upfront about wanting to talk to clients about affordability and other issues with homelessness. The consensus was that people would love to tell their story, and for the most part I simply listened at first. When I established a respectable reputation with the clients, I began to ask some more detailed questions.



### **Gateway Center**

Gateway Center houses 369 beds for men who are enrolled in residential programs and actively working to end their homelessness. Women and children are permitted to stay in separate facilities from the men.



### **Salvation Army**

The purpose of The Salvation Army Metro Atlanta Red Shield Services Emergency and Transitional Housing Facility (Red Shield Shelter) is to provide strategic intervention, refuge and safe lodging for homeless men, women and families with children in crisis.



### **City of Refuge**

City of Refuge seeks to lead individuals and families on an uninterrupted journey to self-sufficiency. They focus on four key impact areas including: Health & Wellness, Housing, Vocational Training, and Youth Development.

### **Rick and DJ - Clients**

Rick and DJ were the first clients that opened up to me. They were quite the dynamic duo with Rick being a 68-year-old skeptic and scholar, and DJ being a 51-year-old loose cannon. People find friendships in mysterious ways, in this case, two cynics found a common ground. Maybe it was the eighth rerun of Halloween on the television or just being flexible with the resources we were allowed to hand out, we began to develop a bond where I was the innocent hopeful bystander and they were the seasoned veterans. This took us on a political and philosophical

journey looking at our presidency and candidates to talking about god and a little bit of existentialism. By this point, I started to ask some questions pertaining to the project and where they might be able to fill in gaps in the research only someone experiencing homelessness could.

### ***What would an affordable housing rent be to you?***

Rick – Just under \$350

DJ – I could probably do \$310, give or take a buck fifty extra because that's what I've got in my wallet.

## **Rick and DJ - Clients**

***Would you be willing to co-live with another homeless person in a shared space or would you want to live independently?***

Rick – I like the idea of living independently, but loneliness can really take you to a dark place. As far as shared spaces of living, I would enjoy being with other people, but at some point, privacy outweighs the need to interact with other people. Sometimes people get to rowdy like this guy over here (Looks glaringly at DJ).

DJ- We already are sharing spaces and bunkbeds; you aren't going to change anything there. For me it's about protecting my stash from my roommate while I am out at night.

***What kind of jobs do you gravitate towards?***

Rick- I have been doing the program here that trains you to get certified to work in kitchens. I think any kind of job that will hire is worth it. I know some guys that do the day labor and landscaping services, but it can get hot out there for an old man like me.

DJ- (Goes a little off topic) If I could just get away with selling drugs for a couple months, I could make \$1,500 dollars a day. (Me) \$1,500 is a lot of money per day, you would be making more than doctors. (DJ) Do you not have to pay a middle man? Cut the middle man Josh, you got to think bigger. Go big or go home, and when you do not have a home, you can go bigger. (Rick shaking his head)

***I have been interested in mapping homelessness to help people know where additional assistance might be needed and to help homeless individuals find places and resources that might be available to them. Is this worth my time or should I try a different avenue? How would I even go about collecting that information?***

Rick- Every Homeless person has a smart phone; it is a means of communication. If you could create some kind of app, you could

just let people populate that information for you. It would be nice to know where an available bed might be when the shelters get too full.

DJ- You would never be able to find everyone; people keep moving from one place to the next. I like the idea of sharing resources because you know those people in Buckhead be gettin' the better deal. (Me) What do you mean? (DJ) They be getting suits and better food up there because they have more donations than us down here. They even give you things just so they do not have to see you. You would not even know we were homeless because they dress us so nice up there. (Me) I am interested in looking into that, where would I find people who are homeless in Buckhead? (DJ) Look for all those nice-looking people in the parks, those are us. (Me) What if they are not homeless and I embarrass myself? (DJ) That's life. (Shared laughter)

***If you could change one space at shelters what would it look like?***

Rick- I think people get exceptionally bored with the living arrangements. We sleep, eat, go to work and then come back to watch the same television shows over and over. There is a lot of monotony that happens, and some people need that routine. If there could be some kind of work out space for folks to relieve stress that would be nice. There needs to be more spaces to reduce stress or people start to find other means like drugs. (Me) Aren't you a little old to be lifting weights? (Rick) I've still got it in me, but maybe something less intense for us old people.

DJ- I've been to those rec facilities where you get a shower and get to use the pool for less than a couple bucks a month. I got to play basketball with people who did not even care that I was homeless. Those were good times until my back gave out. Maybe something that could help us make money indirectly?

## **Kenneth - Client**

Kenneth (38-years of age) was the last person to come in on a Monday, technically after the doors had been locked up. At first, I thought Kenneth was a volunteer looking for some-one, I did not think of him as the veteran we were expecting. He was wearing a striped button down, tucked into nice dress pants with a lanyard around his neck. He was your standard looking IT person who fixes computers, and sure enough, he was studying computer science at a community college. As I received his belongings to take to the decontamination room, you could tell this person was different, there was a sense of embarrassment to the way he was acting. This was definitely the first time he had been homeless and did not know where else to go or how to act with his situation. He had been living outside of the Mercedes Benz Stadium for the past three days before he made arrangements with this shelter. In his backpack was a laptop, several electronics, a change of clothes and a lot of food from CVS. I do not think Kenneth understood how to be homeless because his choice of eating was premium caramel popcorn, pistachios, and everything in between. Kenneth was well educated, and I am not sure what circumstances brought him to this low point in his life or why he did not have family and friends he could turn to. Without prying too deep, it seemed he was afraid to ask for help because of what his family might think of him. No one wants to feel like a failure in the eyes of their family. I asked Kenneth a series of different questions as we filled out about two hours of paper work into the night.

***When you were looking for a shelter, where was the first place you looked?***

I based my initial search on proximity. This was the closest place to where I was currently staying and I really needed to get off the streets because I was afraid for my safety. There was not a specific criterion, just a temporary place to help me get organized again.

***I am looking into micro housing for the homeless, would that have benefited your situation more so than staying at a shelter tonight?***

If there was an option for my own place to live, I would take it in a heartbeat. I am not used to being around this sort of crowd and it makes me uncomfortable thinking about my belongings. I just could not stay out in the cold another night and had to make a decision. I had the rug swept out from under my feet and it has taken me a little while to rationalize the situation. My own place would be like having a second chance, this is more like a prison. (Me) Well it used to be a prison, now it's a place of refuge.

***If you could change something about the shelter that would fit your current needs, what would it be?***

Somewhere safer to store my larger valuables like my laptop and headphones. These lockboxes do not feel very secure and the rooms are just a curtain. I want to be able to lock up my room and my things again without having to worry about some guy walking in and jacking my stuff. There is very little privacy here.



### **Beth and Anita - Employee**

Beth and Anita are caseworkers and volunteer directors at one of the shelters. Beth used to be homeless herself at one point and you would never know it if she did not bring it up. Her father was a pastor and she went through sort of a goth and drug phase with a bad boyfriend before cleaning herself up, finding God, and getting a Master's degree all in a short turnaround. She realized her passion for helping others was where she wanted to be and found this shelter to be her calling. Anita manages one of the floors full of men all day and through the night. If she is not at her desk, she is making a bed or signing someone in and showing them the facilities. Half my time as a volunteer was having to find Anne for people because she was always disappearing to help someone else. You had to be careful when Anita was not around to direct the distribution of resources because the moment people saw the supply door open it was like a mad house to get what they needed. You could easily run out of pillows and blankets for new people coming in if you were not vigilant.

#### **Are all of the sheets, towels, and clothes reliant on donations? Do you ever run out?**

Beth- We get donations every now and then and are pretty good at distributing items to clients in need, but we are always in need of more. Everything is pretty much what we have collected and recycled over time as people come and go. A lot of people will donate toys and clothing that would be more suited to another shelter's clients and we have to sort through it and send it back out.

Anita- You saw that room of clothes, that is all we got. When that is gone, nobody gets anything and we have to go digging in that

backroom for more or wait for the next delivery. (Me) I noticed it was hard to find the right size shoe and pants for people and there was always a fight for a nice jacket. Anita- You can usually get pretty close, but people cannot be too picky about what they get. We keep suits on lock up for when people are going for a job. Jackets and Sweaters are always in high demand.

#### ***I am good with mapping software that might be useful to help create material to explain availability at shelters and their relationships with one another.***

#### ***Would that be helpful in any way?***

Beth- We already have a database that lets case workers see bed availability where we put out a call to let people know that we have room to take more people on. (Me) Can we use that data to help people on the streets? Beth- For the most part the information can be sensitive and includes HIV status, etc. so the only people with access are people working cases. It might be useful to eventually create an application that could track availability, I think Amy Zaremba from Partners for Home was working with someone who already has an app you can check with her.

Anita- I like where your head is Josh, but how would be able to maintain that information if you were not around to update it? It would just get lost over time even though it might have made an impact in the short term. I've got some interns this year that have been working on some useful material like fliers, but they could probably use your expertise.

#### ***How often do you hear of a success story?***

Beth- When people do not comeback, that is typically a success story for me. There have been people that got out of poverty and returned to work to help get others off the streets. I could not put a percentage on it.

Anita- My success is knowing each of these people have a roof over their heads for the night.

#### ***Do you think housing can come before services? (Explaining the Finland example)***

Beth- I think the services are essential to help get more extreme cases back on track. In some mild cases I would say all they really need is a home to get their life in order.

Anita- If we could give housing to everyone I would be out of a job! I would love the day when that happens. I think you will always need people like me to manage the resources and help get people the things they need to find their way. It's an added voice of reason that some people need to get off their lazy butts.

### **LeShay and DeAnthony - Employees**

LeShay and DeAnthony work the base floor of one of the shelters. DeAnthony is a night time security guard and LeShay handles the initial check-in process, access to resources, and parts of the kitchen. In addition, LeShay has to sort all the donations that arrive in garbage bags into the distribution room and the ones that go to other shelters into the back room. Some of the donations arrive in boxes that have prepackaged essential goods for clients to take with them immediately upon entry. This is provided through a net-

work of churches and individual donators. The clothing and linens are something we have to manage because of how limited they can be at times.

#### ***How do you feel about all of the people sleeping outside of the door on the sidewalk?***

LeShay- They have to be processed before they can come in here, we cannot just let everyone in that might bring in other issues for us.

DeAnthony- I get a knock on the door every now and then from someone that missed curfew, but for the most part its people looking for other people that might be inside. After about 10 o'clock people give up and the noise dies down as people go to sleep.

#### ***Is there a way for us to let other shelters that might have excess resources know of our limitations during peak times of year?***

#### ***I heard Buckhead puts their Homeless people in suits and ties.***

LeShay- Where did you hear that? You cannot trust everything people say in here. Shelters are pretty good about giving any excess items they might have to help other shelters in need, but there is no system tracking inventory. If we have a serious lack of items we will put a request out to our network with a list of necessities.

#### ***Have you ever encountered an unsafe situation that required the use of force?***

DeAnthony- Every now and then we will get a disgruntled guy that is usually high that we have to send away, but I have never really feared for my safety.

### Rodriguez - Employee

Rodriguez has been leading the kitchen as a professional chef for over fifteen years at a shelter. He plans out the meals based on the limited information he receives and tries to minimize the food waste. “Food service is all about quality and speed, you cannot sacrifice time that would take away from putting out a better product,” exclaims Rodriguez. He explains all these things half way across the kitchen shouting while multitasking three different stations of food by himself. He has one other worker who manages the service of the food to the clients, other than that, it is him doing most of the cooking and relying on volunteers. The following were quick fire question and answers as we were too busy all the time to sit down and really talk until the service was complete.

#### *How many people do we serve on a single service?*

We never know, somedays it could be 70 other times over 100. It depends on the day and the time of year. During Thanksgiving or the holidays, we might need to feed 300 people at a single time.

#### *I have already prepared 600 beverages today which took a good while, how do you manage a busier season?*

Usually we get more volunteers during that time or we ask some of the residents to help out. For the most part it is me running my show. That is why you have to be Quick, quick, quick! (Runs across the room)

#### *What do we do with all the leftovers if we serve less people?*

I package and store leftovers in those heating boxes over there, or freeze and refrigerate for another time depending on the food. Sometimes I serve it up the following morning and it just gets devoured. We try to give it away as much as we can.

#### *Is there a better way to manage knowing how many people we will serve on any given day?*

You just got to have a feel for it. If I knew that, it would save me a lot of time and energy. You just have to control the portions based on who shows up.

#### *How do you plan your meals?*

It depends on what meats and other foods we have available. I try to change it up to keep it interesting and I will order favorites throughout the year. We will have three or more options for people at any given time that can be served up buffet style.

#### *How do you plan for healthy options and dietary restrictions?*

We probably could have more healthy options, typically we just have a main vegetable for the day like green beans, collards, and broccoli. We just kind of work around dietary restrictions as we serve the food the case worker, as you saw, will let us know.

The case worker in this case was a person assigned to about fourty individuals that she keeps track of on a clip board. If they have dietary restrictions she would let us know before serving them. From what we saw in the kitchen, it is like a teacher with a group of students that she is responsible for throughout the facility.

#### *If you could change one thing in the kitchen what would it be?*

More staff! This place is a two man show half the time and we are churning out thousands of pounds of food. This place will keep you in shape.

### Robert and Nicolas - Clients

Robert (46) and Nicolas (61) were your next dynamic duo in training a perfect juxtaposition to DJ and Rick. While Robert was messy with his appearance, you could tell Nicolas liked to be dressed to the nines (well-dressed). When I took them to pick up extra clothes from the donation room, Robert immediately grabbed the baggiest things he could find. On the other hand, Nicolas would carefully inspect each article of clothing as if it were his last. Nicholas would make sure it was always the right size and would not accept any of the shabbier options in the room even if it meant not having a jacket heading into winter. I had to be very careful with picking out his linen being afraid he would reject them on the spot, but he was very accepting of everything after his bodily appearance.

#### *How much could you afford to pay on rent that would seem affordable to you? This would be your own place to live.*

Robert – Probably \$290. It depends what I get, I know some places on the Westside going for \$550 and you just do not get anything so why do I have to pay more?

Nicolas – Around \$350 is a fair price. I know people have to maintain the property so they need a little extra. I have applied to the government before with some program for disabled veterans to subsidize my rent when I was trying to live somewhere better. (Me) How did that work out? Nicolas- I am still waiting to hear back, I do not know who to follow up with they keep sending me on a wild goose chase.

#### *Do you prefer living by yourself or would you like to have a roommate? Would you live in a place that has shared living spaces, but private rooms?*

Robert – If it keeps the cost down, I would not mind. I would want the guy to be vetted before he came into my place though. Like a background check or something just to know where he has been. Nicolas - Nobody is going to be a fan of my tastes, but I have never had a problem bunking with other people. It is always nice to have someone there to look out for you.

#### *They provide some training services here like how to become a chef. Does that interest you guys or would you like to see them train people to do other kinds of jobs?*

Robert- I know they pay people who know how to weld a lot of money. Any kind of jobs that are not too complicated that pay well, I think they should provide people the opportunity to learn those skills.

Nicolas- I am not really interested in a job at the moment. I like just kind of not worrying about time as long as there is somewhere to get a free bite to eat.

#### *If you could add a new room to this facility what would it be?*

Robert- A smoke room. I cannot seem to kick the habit even though I cannot even afford the damn things. We have to go outside in the cold just to smoke a cigarette.

Nicolas- I would like to see an art room where people can paint. You would be surprised how many homeless people are actually really talented artists. For all you know I am the next Picasso.

*“Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.”*  
–Pablo Picasso



# Gateway Center

## The Routine - Processing

1. The floor manager receives a list of cases sent through an online database populated by case workers and other shelters. The database allows people to see vacancies and the history of a client.
2. Each case is put in a manila folder with the client's name and a series of forms that are required to be signed.
3. The client arrives and passes through security where they make their initial check in before they are sent to their designated floor.
4. We take the client to the locked storage closet on their floor where we provide linens, a pillow, a pillow case, an extra blanket, a towel and wash cloth, and a prepackaged backpack of essential goods (hygenic).
5. We take the client to find an open bed to place these items and write the number on the manila folder (Rooms do not have doors, but have a vanity curtain. They contain a single bunk bed with a small lockbox).
6. We sit down with the client to fill out the paper work to be entered into the database. While paper work is being filled out we explain the decontamination procedure. Decontamination Procedure- a process by which we remove all the client's belongings and clothes to be put in a heated chamber that kills bugs, eggs, etc they may have on their person unknowingly.
7. We take the client to a locked clothing room downstairs to replace their clothes with whatever is available from donations (sometimes things do not fit!). There clothes and belongings are gathered into a plastic bag which is taken to the decontamination chamber to be processed (Does not include electronics).
8. By this point the Client has been entered into the system, they have a new set of clothes while they wait for their belongings to return from the chamber, and they are free to move about the facility. There are check points that indicate when people sign in and out of the floor as well as the facility.

## The Schedule - Client Services

Regular program admission is Monday through Friday at 7:00 AM and operates on a first come, first serve basis.

Curfew is at 8:00 PM, which can deter people from wanting to stay at the shelter. After 8:00 PM all programs are shut down.

- **Clear Path** (Coordinated Assessment Program) Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

- **Showers (Men)** 7 days a week 7:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (CEC closes 5:00 p.m.to 7:00 p.m.) 7:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.

- **Showers (Women)** 7 days a week 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

- **Clothing Closet** Mon-Tues-Wed-Thurs 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Max of 30 individual served daily)

- **Locker Sign-Up** Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m and 3:00 – 4:00 pm. (Access is available 7 days a week. Interested parties must have their own lock and a valid ID)

- **Phone and Charging Stations** 7 days a week 7:00 a.m.-Noon; 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

- **Division of Family & Children Services** (Food Stamp) Tuesday's and Thursday (only) 8:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (By Referral only).

- **Cross Road Ministries** 2nd and 4th Monday of every Month 9 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

- **First Step Benefits** Monday 10:00 – 12:00 p.m. (Entitlement Benefits Application Assistance)

- **Back on My Feet** Wednesdays 7:00 a.m.

- **Laundry Facilities** 7 days a week 7:00 a.m. – Noon

- **Mercy Care** – TB Screening Monday and Wednesday 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

## The Programs and Amenities

- **Veteran's Programs** - Gateway partners with the US Department of Veterans Affairs to help move Veterans out of homelessness.

- **Resident Interns** - Clients who become Resident Assistants are mentors and role models helping the Gateway community.

- **Life Changers** - Life Changers is a program open to any individual committed to moving out of homelessness.

- **Clear Path Stabilization Beds** - Clients screened by Clear Path are temporarily housed at Gateway Center

- **Careers Resource Center** - The career resource center provides job readiness training, financial literacy, dress for success, resume building, and job linkage.

- **PATH Programs** - Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) provides services for men experiencing homelessness and who have severe and persisted mental illness. PATH partners are Hope Atlanta, Mercy Care, and Community Friendship.

- **Recuperative Care** - Partnership program with Mercy Care Clinic that provides a post-hospital healing space for homeless individuals.

- **Upwards** - Gateway's addiction recovery program.

- **Georgia Works** - Partnership program focusing on employment and empowerment.

- **Client Engagement Center (CEC)** - Public services open 24/7. Includes showers, lockers, phones, the Clothing Closet, restrooms, and an interfaith chapel.

- **Hope Atlanta Traveler's Aid** - Reunification program that connects individuals to loved ones in other states.

- **Division of Family and Children Services** - Gateway partners with DFACS to help homeless individuals access food stamps and other resources.

- **Mercy Care Clinic** - In-house clinic open Monday – Friday.

- **Back On My Feet** - Back on My Feet seeks to revolutionize the way our society approaches homelessness with their unique running-based model.

- **Crossroads** - Crossroads offers compassion with constructive programs designed to give the people who come to us for help the tools they need to get off the streets

- **First Step** - First Step aims to employ those who struggle most to break their own cycles of poverty, giving preference to the homeless, military veterans, and individuals who have been previously incarcerated.

- **Clear Path** - Clear Path is a single point of entry to Atlanta's housing continuum.

- **Caroline's Kitchen** - Gateway Center's food service operations and training program. <https://www.gatewayctr.org/programs-and-services/>

# Case Working

**TRACY WOODARD** - Caseworker for Intown Collaborative Ministries who receive grants from the City of Atlanta

## IN REGARDS TO SERVICES

There needs to be more shelter services that specifically target families. A single mom with a 5-year-old child only has a few places to choose because shelters have different regulations when children are involved. Shelters have employment opportunities, health services, job training - aimed at single men, but youth services are scarce and the HIV Positive/ Trans community are pretty much disregarded. If i took you to Lower Wall Street right now we would find about twenty transex workers hiding out. Allowing shelters and services to cater to a larger base would have a great impact.

## 'EASY' CLIENT EXAMPLE

We had a woman at the Mercy Church Soup Kitchen that had health insurance and social security, but no access to the money because of a learning disability. What is a person who is illiterate, has no identification, and has the mind of an 8-year-old supposed to do to survive without assistance? I have to take her places, get her an ID (hold it for her which is illegal), get her a birth certificate, mental health evaluation, proof of income, homeless verification letter, criminal background check, etc. All these things are required for referral, but we still need to get her money which is being sent to Mary.

Who is Mary? Where does Mary live? All she knows is the bus she needs to take to get home, so I followed her to find out if Mary is a scammer. Mary is her grandmother who refuses to sign over the money because she believes her granddaughter will use it for drugs. "GET OFF MY LAWN!" She has no trust for us, and thinks we are thieves. Eventually we are able to get the documents needed for Quest Payee Services to represent the client's money. This money will pay for an assisted living shelter (which is clearly essential) and give the granddaughter a small allowance. 90% of clients have no documentation, cannot take care of themselves, and are living on the sidewalk. These are people who want to be helped and stay in touch with me via phone because they know there is housing at the end of the tunnel.

## INTERVIEWS AND OBSERVATIONS

*Private Sector, Public Sector, Non-Profit Sector*

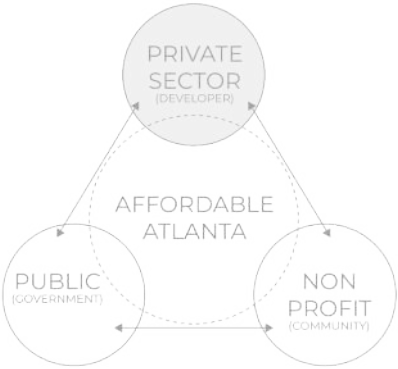
The following is an informal interview process with stakeholders from the private, public, and non-profit sector. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic only a few of the interviews were able to be conducted in person. Most of the interviews were handled via telephone or a short response survey to be respectful of time.

The text may be abbreviated (from the dialogue version) to get the main ideas from the conversations that took place. All of the persons interviewed either have a handle in homelessness or affordability in the Atlanta area. The reason for the shortened text is to highlight the main ideas each organization operates around without overshadowing the importance of the previous stakeholders' interviews.

These excerpts will be important in carrying on to part two of the paper in which a design will be conducted for Cooper ST that looks at some of the topics discussed. Important to this section is understanding housing and zoning alternatives, any difficulties experienced by their sector, policy making, and additional means of creative problem solving being employed in Atlanta.

**This portion of the paper can only be used for education purposes to respect the wishes of the interviewed. Any use of this dialogue beyond the context of Georgia Tech and its students is strictly prohibited.**

EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY



### PRIVATE

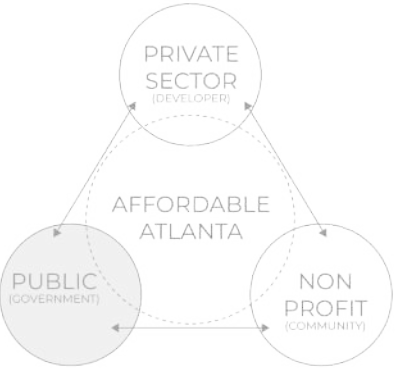
**Joel Jassu |  
Eight Village**

<https://eightvillage.com/>

**Elizabeth Ward and  
Christy Dodson |  
Kronberg Wall Urbanists +  
Architects**

<https://www.kronbergua.com/>

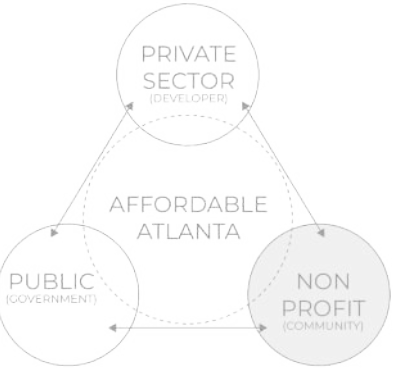
**Rodney Milton |  
Senior Housing Policy and  
Development Manager  
Atlanta Beltline Inc.**  
<https://beltline.org/the-project/leadership/atlanta-beltline-inc-team/>



### PUBLIC

**Honorable Matt Westmoreland |  
City Council Post 2 at Large**  
<https://citycouncil.atlantaga.gov/council-members/matt-westmoreland>

**Anthony Grant |  
Inclusionary Zoning  
Compliance Specialist  
City of Atlanta**  
<https://www.atlantaga.gov/government/departments/city-planning/office-of-housing-community-development/inclusionary-zoning-policy>



### NON-PROFIT

**Tracy Woodard |  
The Mad Housers**  
<http://madhousers.org/>

**John Ahmann  
Westside Future Fund**  
<https://www.westsidefuturefund.org/>

EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY



PRIVATE

KRONBERG WALL URBANISTS + ARCHITECTS

Kronberg Urbanists + Architects is a multidisciplinary design studio that utilizes expertise in architecture, urban design, policy making, and real estate development to make neighborhoods better. Their goal is to help small businesses, nonprofits, private developers, and municipalities visualize and realize neighborhood redevelopment projects to achieve financial, social, and environmental success. <https://www.kronbergua.com/>



ELIZABETH WARD



CHRISTY DODSON

1.

Most people see zoning laws as a commandment written in stone. KUA sees them more as opportunity and reimagines the barriers set up by these policies to maximize the potential of urban design in a community. Can you touch on how KUA has audited municipal zoning ordinances to identify barriers to incremental development and affordable housing initiatives?
2.

KUA has pushed for density and new types of housing with the Housing Choice program. How do you demonstrate to clients the need for these new housing types? What are the benefits that come with the incorporation of these developments?
3.

We have been looking at a property on Cooper St in South Downtown owned by the Atlanta Public School System. Has KUA worked with APS before or publicly owned land to develop a new project?

1. Education

Many people don't realize the profound effect that invisible rules and regulations have on the built environment. Zoning is just one of many forms of regulations that govern our physical world, but it is a powerful tool in shaping our communities. Those that do understand this connection, assume that the regulations as they currently exist protect and encourage the character and values most desired for the future of neighborhoods or communities. This belief is often one of the biggest barriers to meaningful zoning reform.

Before we start talking specific code strategies, we think it is important for communities to first understand the exclusionary history behind zoning ordinances, and how this history continues to create inequitable and unsustainable places. Before zoning, cities were growing and changing incrementally – at the human scale. After zoning, incremental changes became difficult if not impossible. While the purpose of zoning ordinances has changed very little since their inception a century ago, most ordinances have become needlessly cumbersome and complex. Without providing this historical context, communities are skeptical of changes,

believing that the complexity and rigidity of the code is an asset that protects their interests. Changing ordinances requires community buy-in, so bringing communities along is paramount.

Trade-offs and Implementation

In order to illustrate the need for code reform, we first ask communities what type of development they want to see – most want to see affordable, inclusive development; this includes housing choice such as ADUs and Missing Middle. We then show communities how their current ordinance prevents the desired development patterns through design exercises. Use restrictions, minimum lot sizes, parking requirements, definitions of what a family is – all of these rules work together to prevent diverse, affordable, incremental development; but it's difficult to understand the impacts of these words until you work through the design process. Finally, we run pro formas on these development types. We want to ensure that if a community goes through the tremendous effort of changing their ordinance, that the development types that they want are financially feasible. We want changing the rules to result in the desired changes to the built environment.

EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

The process of education changes a community's perspective from positions of defense or protection to positions of collaboration. Once neighbors are able to connect the dots from high level policy, to design development, to implementation, neighbors are able to understand how zoning reform can support their values of diversity, affordability, and incremental development. The idea is to bring community-level goals down to the ground for implementation. Making the explicit connection between big ideas, zoning policies, and site-specific projects helps communities recognize that most zoning codes are exclusionary in nature, and reform is necessary if we are to uphold our community values.

2. Most communities understand that there is a need for housing, especially affordable housing. But what many communities don't understand is what that housing looks like, where it goes, how it is financed, and how allowing housing choice ultimately benefits everyone. We use our design skills to illustrate many of these concepts, walking people through the financial and community benefits of providing diverse housing choices in walkable neighborhoods. A greater density of people at the neighborhood scale provides increased tax revenue for schools, parks, mobility initiatives, services, and infrastructure maintenance. Density provides demand for local goods and services, like corner stores and coffee shops. Density is often a scary word, but when you show people that density is achievable at an incremental and human scale, it changes the conversation.

We also use familiar, existing examples of what housing choice looks like. Atlanta has many great examples of historic street car commercial nodes and missing middle housing - and it should be no surprise that these are some of the most desirable, expensive neighborhoods in the city: Inman Park, Candler Park, Midtown, and Old Fourth Ward, for example. A lot of what we are advocating for is simply re-allowing what was once standard development patterns. Did you know for example,

that in one of our earliest zoning ordinances written in 1929, Atlanta's residential districts allowed for all lots to build a duplex and an ADU, by right? It is always easier to get community buy-in when you can point to examples that already exist and that are familiar to the neighborhood. While new projects incorporating housing choice are challenging to develop now, the hope is that as these projects come to fruition and provide value to communities, inclusive development patterns become more normalized.

3. KUA is currently working with the Atlanta Land Trust to create a development with diverse housing choices that will be permanently affordable. We also work with a number of nonprofit developers, including Westside Future Fund and Grove Park Renewal, to provide creative affordable housing options across the City.

A major cost in development is land; land trusts allow this cost to be removed from the equation while creating long-term affordability options and reducing displacement. This is a particularly powerful tool to incentivize private developers to provide long-term affordable housing. While construction markets are quickly changing, the reality is that the cost to construct a unit of housing is largely the same, regardless if that unit will be sold or rented at market rate or at an affordable rate. Removing the land cost from the development equation subsidizes this up-front cost to developers, in turn allowing for lower sale or rental prices while maintaining necessary development returns.

EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

PRIVATE

EIGHTVILLAGE

Eightvillage strives to bring together facets of architecture, urban design, ecology, and education to collaborate and help foster a sense of place. They use their technical skillset as architects, planners and designers to supplement an empathetic process. Collaboration and communication are at the core of this process, and they are always energized to facilitate, mobilize, and catalyze projects that have an impact on people and our planet. <https://eightvillage.com/>



JOEL JASSU

1. Kathryn Marchman, the Partners for Home Director, has been interested in your company's concept of ADU's to help solve Atlanta's affordability crisis. In regards to your program, Backyard ATL, how are these ADU's built? Who funds and who constructs the final product? Are these low barrier dwellings where homeless people with criminal backgrounds could live? <https://www.backyardatl.com/>
2. How has Eightvillage worked around zoning policies the City of Atlanta has employed? Have you pushed any policies to be changed?
3. Do you have a memorable project that involved all three sectors?

1. We think about Backyard ATL in three different ways: it's an economic wealth building tool, it is a tool that would potentially solve a gentrification problem, and it provides an opportunity for preservation.
  - It provides a passive income source to homeowners which helps them stay longer and have an asset that can be used towards family education and investments.
  - The homeowner has the opportunity to grow with the neighborhood rather be pushed out.
  - "When an old person dies, a library goes with them" (African proverb) in regards to the value of preserviing culture and history.

The ADU acts as another mortgage which can be frightening to homeowners at first so we provide them financial education to help them better understand their property and how to maintain their assets.

How many people do you know who can afford a \$120,000 mortgage on top of their current mortgage? It is difficult to find people who want to take on this type of project. We have been able to map target areas that we think could provide this type of housing. Backyards are one of the most underutilized land areas in Atlanta.

Eightvillage signs the lease, we bring in investors, we pay for the construction, and we give the owner a percentage of the rent until the mortgage is paid off. When the mortgage is paid, the home owner owns the asset.

Basically this is a real estate venture that avoids land acquisition which drives prices down and allows for a more affordable rent option.

2. Zoning is someone's projection and perception of what a neighborhood should look like, often without living there themselves. This has framed our cities and has been a problem ever since.

We have worked with Terri Lee on reducing the nuance of zoning procedures by expediting an owner's ability to obtain ADU zoning within a shorter period of time (More accessible to the public).

Defining these new policies is what becomes difficult so we try to think about the architecture in an innovative manner. How does this new structure look? Can we redesign the foundation? Architecture creativity versus regulation conversations with the City. Can the owner parcel the land separately from their home? (Land Trust)

3. Sweet Auburn Walks was a community-based design workshop which provided a neighborhood in the area the opportunity to represent themselves on a street design. <https://eightvillage.com/sweet-auburn-walks>

How do we begin change in a community when we do not live there? How can we be agents of this change without influencing them with our bias? How do we push people to talk to the city to implement ideas?

The process was 8 weeks of WALKshops. We gave people a pencil and notepad and walked Hilliard Street to generate ideas, to make them sketch their thoughts before gathering and discussing their findings.

We took the findings and helped create boards that were put into a Beltline Exhibition where the community could represent themselves. Instead of the City or professionals coming in and the neighborhood chooses suggested ideas, we helped guide the neighbors to be their own designer.

EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

PRIVATE

ATLANTA BELTLINE INC.

Atlanta Beltline, Inc. is the private side of the Atlanta Beltline organization that handles all aspects of planning. Rodney Milton was brought in as a Senior Housing Policy and Development Manager to assure the affordability of housing and neighborhood retention. Rodney strives for equity, but also believes in the need for major change to create social progress. <https://beltline.org/>



RODNEY MILTON, JR.

1. What is Atlanta Beltline Inc's plan for preserving its goal of 5,600 quality affordable housing opportunities for residents around the BeltLine?
2. How do you go about preserving a community in the face of major development?
3. ABI is a private company and ABP (Atlanta Belt-Line Partnership) is a non-profit. How does that relationship work out? What are their responsibilities?

1. The goal we set out to achieve is 5,600 units of affordable and workforce housing by the year 2030. Since that goal was introduced back in 2006, we have had over 2000 affordable units in the Tax Allocation District and a little over a thousand in the Planning Area. We have about 900 units in the pipeline so far in 2020 which pushes past the half way mark of our initial goal. To create these units, we use a network of partners including Invest Atlanta, Atlanta Housing Authority, Department of Community Affairs, as well as programs These partners help guide developers and provide additional tools and incentives to build affordable units on the BeltLine. In terms of control over funding, the Atlanta BeltLine Affordable Housing Advisory Board was put into effect by city legislation to administer and execute the BeltLine Affordable Housing Trust Fund for projects. You can see a lot of our studies and references on the website which explains the TAD, development strategies, if you can think it, we have made it to answer all questions. <https://beltline.org/the-project/affordable-housing-on-the-beltline/research-reports/>

the trust. The process is simple: CLT buys homes or properties using public or private investment, they sell the home to a qualified low income buyer at an affordable rate, the CLT continues to own the land for future buyers, if the buyer decides to sell they go through the CLT and sell it at an affordable rate to create lasting affordability. <https://atlantalandtrust.org/>

3. The ABI team implements strategies and oversees all aspects of planning, developing, and execution of the Atlanta BeltLine project. While ABI handles the work with the City and major stakeholders, the Partnership kind of enables the focused construction and public engagement side of things. Think of the Partnership as a way of crowd sourcing additional funding for projects the community and businesses want while ABI takes the original pot of money to ensure the promise of the entire BeltLine. ABI is federally sourced money from local and state, ABP is from private and philanthropic sources.
2. I think we employ multiple tactics, but a good example is the Community Land Trust. A CLT functions as a means to preserve affordable housing and create long -term security for a community. The beltline has 10 subareas that define the geographical area for trusts. The trusts basically function as community owned land within the subarea by taking parcels off the market. Community decisions are made through a board of representatives that govern

EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY



PUBLIC

ATLANTA CITY COUNCIL

The City of Atlanta is made up of a legislative, executive and judicial branch. The legislative branch represents the City Council, the executive branch includes City departments led by the Mayor, and the judicial branch would be the Courts. As the legislative branch, City Council makes the laws that govern the city. They are responsible for the development of policies, operational standards, budgeting matters, and administering city government. The Council consists of 16 elected members primarily elected by each district. (City of Atlanta 2020).



HONORABLE MATT WESTMORELAND

1. In this research we have found that Atlanta ranks last in the United States for social inequity with a Gini Coefficient of 0.57. How has the Atlanta City Council and public sector gone about combatting this issue?
2. Matt, as a teacher and mentor, what would you say to Georgia Tech Students in the City Planning program who want to begin a career in the public sector? Where have you found great learning opportunities in your career?
3. How can a person in the community wanting to create a new policy get it onto your desk? What would be the best process?

program's director for Horizons Atlanta, providing education to low-income student serving the Metro Area. This really ignited my passion for finding solutions to our inequity in education and has taught me new lessons each step of the way. In addition, it helped me reengage in Atlanta life and made me realize there is an opportunity to engage people in the City of Atlanta like nowhere else. The ability for people to publicly participate and have their voices heard is one of our strongest assets – civic engagement. I would encourage students to pursue avenues here from attending NPU meetings to volunteering in their community. Listen to others, find your voice, and participate in as many activities as you can within your field of interest.

3. People actually do this more frequently than you might imagine. The best way is to simply shoot the idea to a council member and copy all the emails you can find. Find their staff, and then their staff's staff, and it will eventually fall off the grape vine. City hall has research staff, the board has their own administration, contact as many people as you can including the council members. An example of how quick the process could be: I had a person email me in 2018 on supporting a smoke free environment. I passed it to my colleague to run point on it where it fell short. The person persisted and came back to me where we began discussions for an ordinance. In 2019 we passed it on July 13, now you do not see smoking in the airports, bars, any public space. It literally came from reaching out and saying we would like you to do this. Similarly, Kaiserpermanente has an email in my inbox right now about bringing healthy food options to Atlanta as a legislation, more on that down the road.

PUBLIC

INCLUSIONARY ZONING - CITY OF ATLANTA

The City of Atlanta's Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) ordinances became effective on January 29, 2018. The purpose of the program is to promote affordable housing for Atlantans who live and work in the City of Atlanta and is designed to keep Atlanta rents relatively affordable for working individuals and households. The program applies to all new multifamily rental developments, whether stand-alone or mixed-used multi-unit buildings, with at least 10 units that are located within the BeltLine Overlay District (City of Atlanta 2020).



ANTHONY GRANT

1. Zoning Review Board Meetings can at times be filled with unexpected surprises, for example, large supporters and opposers of a re-zoning project would attend, with each of them want to speak, which extends the length of the meetings. They maybe influential Atlantans who maybe part of a development team for a particular re-zoning project and may seek to use that influence to gain leverage for approval.
  - While there is no requirement for members of the public to be involved with the hearings, it is best for those who want to contribute to the meeting, whether as a supporter or opponent, the best advice is for them to be knowledgeable about the re-zoning application, the process and more importantly, be prepared with facts whether for or against the re-zoning.
2. (a) In my evaluation of prospective IZ properties, using GIS, I verify that the parcel is in the Beltline or Westside zones; after this has been verified, I contact the planners to determine if a Special Application Process (SAP) or Beltline (BL) application has been made, and if so, has the applicant been informed about IZ and provided with the respective forms. (b) While I cannot speak from a City Council or City of Atlanta's perspective, I can opine that based on the 13 developments that have complied with the IZ ordinance, there has been an increase in the amount of affordable workforce units in the IZ zones. (c) As with any ordinance, developers will seek out loop-holes to not comply with the ordinance. For example, a few developers used the 'Miscellaneous,

Non-Structural Permit" provisions to determine that they are exempt from the ordinance because the permit does not indicate that a vertical structural permit is not being applied for. (d) As with any ordinance, there is always room for change, whether for the better or worst; however with respect to the IZ ordinance, the option for home ownership should be explored because many developers are choosing to build townhomes or condominiums which at this time, are not subject to the ordinance.

3. Having not attended GTECH, I cannot speak to that institution, however, anyone interested in a career in data management with the objective to entering the public sector, it would behoove them to focus on technical courses such as SQL, PowerBI, etc to analyze data sets. Another suggestion would be to become familiar with public sector policies, especially in the areas of housing.

NON-PROFIT

MAD HOUSERS

MAD HOUSERS Inc. is an Atlanta-based non-profit corporation engaged in charitable work, research and education. Our charter outlines our goals and purposes: To provide shelter for homeless individuals and families regardless of race, creed, national origin, gender, religion, or age. To develop low income housing for people in need of housing. To help people develop the skills and knowledge for constructing and rehabilitating housing and shelter. To increase the quantity and to improve the quality of housing in the world. To act, if necessary as an advocate for the homeless, to ensure that their moral and civil rights are protected. The Mad Housers believe that if a person has a secure space from which to operate, they are much more capable of finding the resources to help themselves.



TRACY WOODARD

- 1. The MAD HOUSERS has provided immediate housing to hundreds of homeless individuals. How do you work around zoning restrictions and communities that discourage these types of homes?
- 2. As a case worker could you better describe the process you take with clients and the essential resources they need to be successful?
- 3. To Georgia Tech Students interested in becoming more involved and exposed to solving social inequity issues, what are your recommendations? What would be a good culture shock?

- 1. The best incite I can provide is that you learn to build with intuition in communities that are going to look the other way. There are zoning rules, but there is a lot of undeveloped land that could have a major impact for our clients. There are both communities and police who are aware of our buildings and turn a blind eye its all about finding the right ones.
- 2. A phone. A lot of my clients are resourceful and can get around, but communication is key to letting people know what is available. Right now, I have some investors that have paid for two hotels to remove people off the street. One hotel provides services to those vulnerable to COVID-19 (prior conditions)/ the other is for those who have the virus. You do not need an id or cash, you just need your name, a birthday, and a medical condition. They will provide shelter for 90 days, a case manager, and meals through the whole process. We have not seen this kind of generosity ever. For work, I've been enrolling people in Mercy Church's soup kitchen who do require an ID (Many lose them to robbery). Within 90 days, my clients have time to get the necessary documents they need to be referred to permanent housing. The hardest part of working a case is finding our clients because the cops will sweep them out, ask them to move along, or arrest them. opportunity to get their documents 90 days are over can be referred to permanent housing. The process right now is so easy my clients can check themselves in without me present. The City wants us to get 15 people stationed outside of the Atlanta Housing Authority in a hotel. This is difficult because we have no relationships with this encampment. "Turnaround could be a week, can you ensure us they are not going to get murdered or turned over to the police by then?" With a phone

- I can tell my client, "Hey come meet me at this safe coffee shop over here." Without a phone they are in the dark.
- 3. There was this PHD Student at Georgia Tech who wanted to build solar hotels so he went around Woodruff Park and collected 173 human turds to prove his point. We do not have that kind of basic data collection in the field anymore. Georgia Tech Students could do a lot by going into the field - the really gnarly sections of downtown Atlanta and seeing how people live and how they are ignored. I would encourage an angle on public health, public policy, and business as an angle. For instance, a lot of businesses have changed their manufacturing process to beoome essential services that cater to the homeless - hand sanitizer is a prime example. Restaurants like Proof is in the Pudding have sent us thousands of meals by labeling themselves essential services. If we were to create business models that create incentives for hotels and meals for people at the bottom... In a pandemic sick people spread illness, but homeless people do not sprout other homeless people, it is not contagious. We have the resources we need, it is curbing public opinion. There is an opportunity for media students who could tackle this problem and show the face of homelessness is not an exconvict. More and more people have been laid off recently that are restaurant workers who are homeless for the first time and are terrified - some have been attacked on the streets, others have considered suicidal thoughts. It is important that students realize the current situation and that it will get better as the economy recovers.

NON-PROFIT

WESTSIDE FUTURE FUND

Westside Future Fund was launched by the Atlanta Committee for Progress (ACP) in December 2014, with the strong leadership support of former Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed. Recognizing the long-term inequity in Atlanta's Historic Westside, the ACP committed to fostering long-term transformational change through a collaborative approach to be led by the Westside Future Fund. The ACP, a coalition of top CEOs and leaders from Atlanta's private sector, universities and nonprofits, made WFF one of its top priorities, and provided early board leadership along with early philanthropic support (Westside Future Fund 2020)



JOHN AHMANN

- 1. Part of the issue is greed. The investors will hold onto a property for years waiting for public investment or a catalyst that will raise their property to a value they seem fit. We try to have strong relationships with real estate investors, but in some cases the money can be more worthwhile than maintaining community and culture. Back in the day, you could buy a property in English Avenue for less than \$10,000, now it is so competitive some properties are too expensive to provide affordable housing. A good example of this taking place is when they proposed Rodney Cook Sr. Park, a new stormwater park similar to the Old Fourth Ward. When word broke wind, a property owner we were in negotiations with now was asking for nearly half a million dollars per acre. Before the park, he was talking about protecting the neighborhood, now it was about making out like a bandit. When you have individuals, who make less than \$20,000, high rental rates, and patient investors the market for affordability becomes stiff and you have to get creative. In this case, it is not just about buying dilapidated buildings to save money, the building is never worth as much as the land. It is finding properties that are still available at a lower rate that meet our criteria for future development. You can see our land use maps and framework plan which helps us determine properties that are essential, in some cases they are worth the extra price to have a major impact on the area. <https://www.westsidefuturefund.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Westside-Land-Use-Framework-Plan-Abbrev-Dec-2017.pdf>

- 2. A positive community change is the preservation of history and culture in our neighborhoods by whatever means large or small. A good example of a positive change, we acquired a historical property last year in English Avenue often referred to as the "yellow store" (This is the same story mentioned when I was locked out of my vehicle from the section – the good, the bad, and the ugly observation #3, Pg. 23). The store has deep roots in English Avenue where the owners have been advocates to the community for over 50 years. They would serve Thanksgiving and Christmas and provide shelter to numerous residents in the area. Revitalization of this historic building shows residents that their voice is heard. The "yellow store" has become a bright beacon of hope to residents that they will not be pushed out of this community. For reference, the name of the store is Cantrell Sodas and Sundaes. The store will continue to function as retail, the only change is adding more essential goods and services in its renovation.
- 3. All of the projects we have taken on are memorable. I recommend you tune into our Summit sessions held every 1st and 3rd Friday. There will be one conducted remotely on May 1st because of COVID-19 restrictions. Transform Westside Summit is where we come together as residents, community leaders, non-profits and executives to share the stories of our successes that currently affect Westside Neighborhoods. There will be a live stream on several platforms I will find you a link. <https://www.westsidefuturefund.org/events/>



*"If you look at what you have in life, you'll always have more. If you look at what you don't have in life, you'll never have enough" –Oprah Winfrey*

## PART ONE CONCLUSION

*Identifying Key Concepts*

Part One begins by establishing a tone of inequality that people have ignored within the Atlanta City Limits out of avoidance or simple ignorance. Key statistics that are presented in the introduction include a high Gini coefficient of 0.57, housing disparities between a wealthy North and poor South in terms of affordability, and higher rents that have significantly outpaced the increase in median income. ‘The Current Situation’ aims to reinforce these quantitative statistics at a regional scale before focusing on the Atlanta area. Maps are introduced to help visualize the homeless and affordability crisis and

the concept of unreliable data is introduced. In seeking better data collection, the paper turns to qualitative data through interviews and observations of people experiencing a need for affordable housing from the lowest income earners (homeless), and interviews with stakeholders in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. The data from personal experience and through statistical research will be used in reinforcing creative solutions in the second part of the paper.

*“...these things become the norm: that some homeless people die of cold on the streets is not news. In contrast, a ten point drop on the stock markets of some cities, is a tragedy. A person dying is not news, but if the stock markets drop ten points it is a tragedy! Thus people are disposed of, as if they were trash.*  
*–Pope Francis*

Interviews and Observations is the voice of the paper that creates balance between the quantitative data and future design. While the statistics will tell us a number of homeless individuals, it cannot tell us the multitude of needs a client might require. Likewise, we cannot begin designing a property without hearing from people that are implementing real projects and policies to solve affordability.

## Design Considerations

- HOUSING FIRST MODEL
- IMMEDIATE HOUSING WITH LOW BARRIERS
- HOMELESS INTAKE PROCESSING
- PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO HOMELESS
- ESSENTIAL NEEDS OF HOMELESS
- SUGGESTED PROGRAMATIC CHANGES TO SHELTERS
- ZONING REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS
- BREAKING ZONING BARRIERS
- TAX ALLOCATION DISTRICTS, OPPORTUNITY ZONES
- HOUSING TYPOLOGIES
- ATTACHED DWELLING UNITS
- FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT (EDUCATION)
- PASSIVE INCOME GENERATORS
- COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS
- COMMUNITY-BASED DESIGN
- COMMUNITY SUPPORTING FACILITY
- HISTORIC AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION
- LAND VALUE AND BUILDING COSTS
- REAL ESTATE CYCLES
- INCLUSIONARY ZONING
- HOUSING POLICIES
- BUSINESS MODELS AND RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION
- PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND NON-PROFIT PARTNERSHIP



# PART TWO CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING





## STRATEGIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

### *Housing First - Partners for Home*

Partners for Home was the response to Mayor Reed's request for a nonprofit to manage the Atlanta continuum of care for homeless services (Partners for Home 2019). Led by Cathryn Marchman, the organization has created a coordinated strategy for ending various types of homelessness by using the local HUD CoC funds and leveraging the support of public and private resources. Appendix Figure 4 illustrates the relationship of Partners for Home's role within the CoC system and supporting parties.

The strategy that Partners for Home uses towards 'Housing First' includes 4 principles: disrupt the system, create right size solutions by population, realign and leverage resources, and create a performance driven system. These principles have had the

highest success rate at the national level, and they have been applied in the Atlanta area (Partners for Home 2017). A copy of the report can be found [https://partnersforhome.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Partners-for-HOME-Strategic-Plan-Brochure\\_FINAL.pdf](https://partnersforhome.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Partners-for-HOME-Strategic-Plan-Brochure_FINAL.pdf).

*“The reality is the money we get from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for continuum of care dollars and homelessness will never be enough to address the issues of homelessness.”*  
—Cathryn Marchman

Disrupt the system begins with a coordinated entry of homeless individuals to assess their immediate needs. While removing barriers to services, this method establishes a standardization between shelters on their program models and policies. In addition, it provides key population groups such as Veterans, youth, family, and

Chronically Homeless the opportunity to get the specific resources they need. Any gaps that this system has is addressed annually in an action plan to ensure the sufficiency and capacity of housing and services. Current gaps discussed are the following: Permanent housing - right sized intervention mix, Emergency shelter/ bridge housing, and housing navigators and coordinated entry. In maintaining housing stabilization, Partners for Home encourages the following services: Mental health/substance abuse control, service revenue, employment, education, transportation, childcare, and housing insecurity/ affordable housing.

Creating right-sized solutions by population pertains to using evidence-based practice to find the best suitability for clients and to create a standard assessment tool in identifying needs. They employ the Housing First stair method of emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing in providing the appropriate care to target populations. This helps

*“In terms of things like ‘NIMBYism’ – ‘Not In My Backyard’ — and stigma and stereotypes, it's such an easy proposition to convince a community or a neighborhood or a developer or landlord to house a teacher or a firefighter or a police officer or even just a low-income individual. But when we throw into the mix that we want to then consider housing someone who's formerly homeless — even if it's a homeless family, let alone somebody who's chronically homeless with issues around addiction and mental health — then it becomes a much more challenging proposition.”*  
—Cathryn Marchman

distribute the appropriate funding and strategies based on the type of homelessness.

Realigning and leveraging resources pertains to the coordination of funding to critical areas. Partners for Home has evaluated both public and private resources to find the availability of money that can better serve specific programs and services that follow their strategic action plan. In the Appendix, Figure 5 shows the current investment distribution from public and private funding.

The last principle is creating a performance driven system. This final principle creates an evaluation of the coordinated system by analyzing the success of specific projects. The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) practices and data quality have carefully been applied to the current projects: Housing First, Trauma Informed Care, and Harm Reduction. In addition, a system performance baseline was created to track progress established by HUD:

1. Measure 1 - Length of Time Homeless
2. Measure 2 - Returns to Homelessness
3. Measure 3 - Number of Homeless Persons
4. Measure 4 - Income Growth in CoC Funded Projects
5. Measure 5 - First Time Homeless
6. Measure 6 - Homelessness Prevention (N/A in Atlanta)
7. Measure 7 - Successful Placement and Retention

These guiding principles have been fundamental in the steady decline of Homelessness found within the Atlanta area.

## STRATEGIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

### *Housing First –Y Foundation*

Finland has shown a radical “Housing First” solution that has eliminated its homeless population. Instead of the typical staircase model where the homeless individual must go through a series of temporary accommodation to get back on track, housing became an unconditional part of the recovery process (Henley 2019). We still maintain a similar process of dumping money into shelters and programs that have a revolving door for homeless persons. For Finland, now rather the revolving door, there is an individual door for every person so that they have a foundation to resolve their own problems. There is still an essential need for providing services to long-term homeless persons who deal with addiction, mental illness, and medical conditions. This method saved the government 15,000 Euros a year

for every homeless person in health, social services, and the justice system. In addition, it has spurred over 250 million euros in housing development and the hiring of 300 support workers (Henley 2019).

Juha Kaakinen provided a Ted talk about the successes of the Y Foundation in eliminating homelessness in Europe. The TED Talk can be found here <https://housingfirsteurope.eu/research/ted-talk-juha-kaakinen-housing-first-finland/>. The following highlights some of the key points from his presentation and the Y Foundation's organization.

He begins by illustrating how Europe has the resources to stop homelessness, and yet it hasn't by showing they have 11 million empty homes and 4.5 million homeless. He identifies that we can dream

about ending the homeless situation, but the first step in this process is changing people's perception. How do people currently answer to the Homeless? Criminalization and ignoring is not humanizing homelessness. The traditional method has been the stair case model as follows:

1. Stop their problems such as drinking and drugs to become housing ready.
2. From Homelessness to Shelter (Step 2)
3. From Shelter to group home and supportive housing
4. Then there is a rental apartment of your own.

*“We had to get rid of the night shelters and short-term hostels we still had back then. They had a very long history in Finland, and everyone could see they were not getting people out of homelessness. We decided to reverse the assumptions.”*  
*–Juha Kaakinen CEO of Y Foundation*

Step by step methods have allowed some to make it, but others have fallen back to homelessness - the revolving door. As the Director of the Y Foundation, Juha has been dedicated to finding immediate permanent housing for homeless individuals. He starts by buying flats from the free market with a grant of about 50% from the Finish Slot Machine Association (gambling money!). "We have 6,675 flats in 52 municipalities that are meant for homeless

people." They then lend the flats to municipalities who choose the homeless to create contracts and provide them additional services. Single apartments scattered around, mostly in owner occupied houses, which later became known as Housing First. The Housing First model is simply put, scattered housing with support. The model looks like the following:

### Housing

1. Housing as a basic human right
2. No assessment of housing readiness
3. Scattered-site housing; independent apartments
4. Separation of housing and services

### Floating services

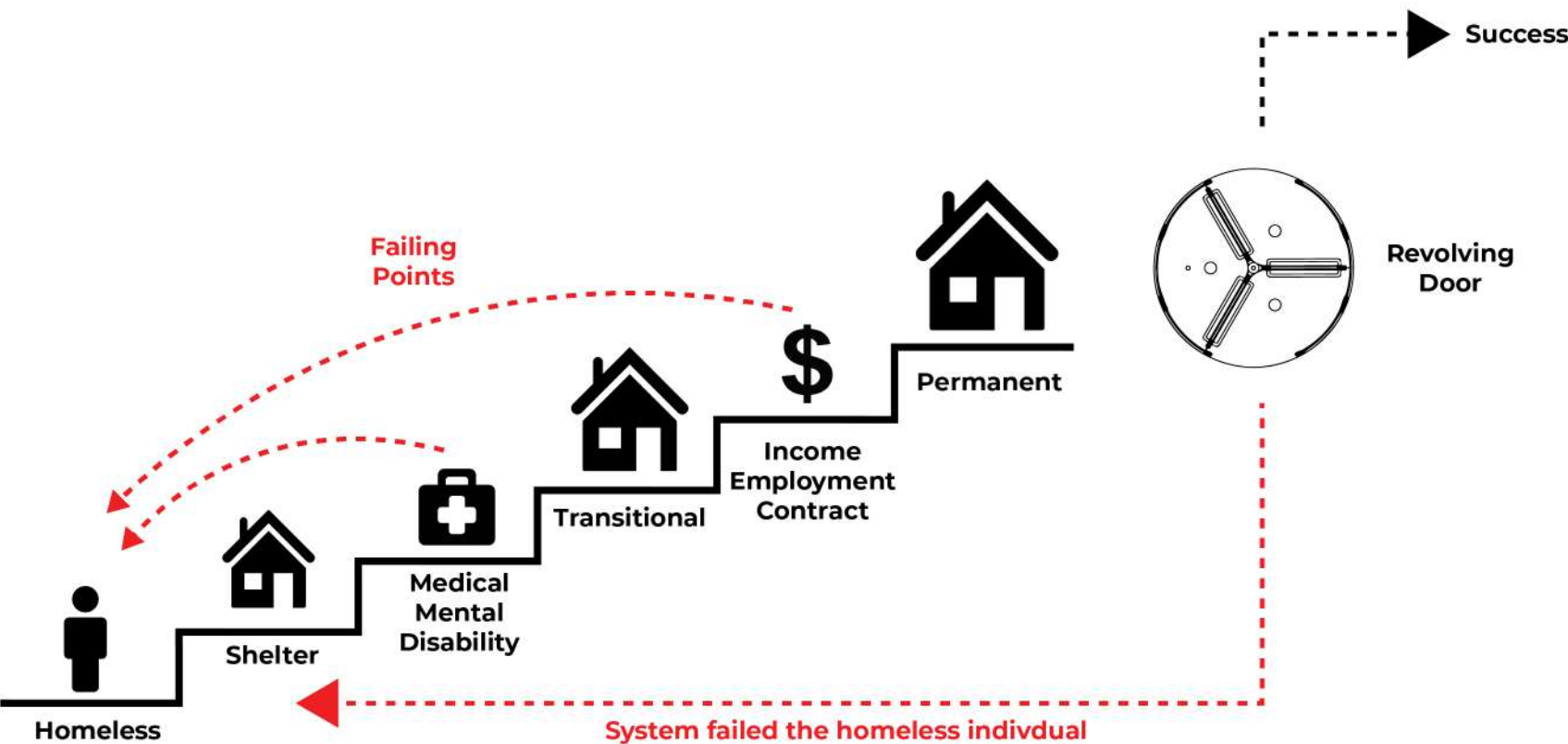
1. Respect, warmth & compassion for all clients
2. Consumer choice and self-determination
3. Recovery orientation: support clients in their process of recovery
4. A commitment of working with clients for as long as they need
5. Harm reduction

He then continues to talk about how they have stopped long-term homelessness Finland and how that has produced savings which makes the venture economical. More importantly, he encourages the understanding of homeless people, there is no one who is hopeless. "All you need, is your head and your heart."



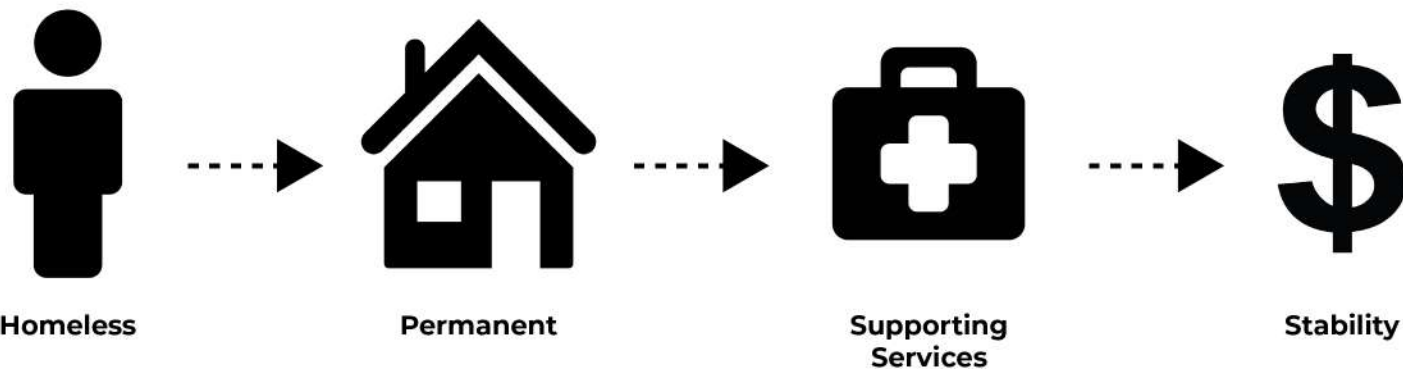
# Typical Model

This model has been widely implemented by most of the US and Europe.



# Housing First Model

This is the most successful model that has been installed by the Y Foundation.



# STRATEGIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

## Essential Resources

Essential resources aims to illustrate the needs of homeless individuals based on previous volunteering, case workers, and program suggestions. These resources will carry forward into the design of a program for Cooper ST SW to meet the needs of the homeless individuals In addition to the needs of homeless persons, there are a list of essential needs that are aimed at the general population in reducing social inequity. These needs have been found through interviews with people in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. These resources will carry forward into the design of a program for Cooper ST SW to meet the needs of the homeless individuals and community at large.

The following questions pertain to the coordination of resources within the Cooper ST SW design.

1. **How can we create a facility that offers community services and homeless services while keeping the anonymity of homeless individuals? Where do we separate, where do we integrate? There is no back door policy, but there is a need for privacy and security.**
2. **How do we create affordabie housing for homeless individuals that does not designate them as homeless? How do we make this model of living attractive to the general population as an affordable look on living? How do we make the housing a community with shared resources and intentions?**



Some of these items may be considered nonessential like recreation spaces and creative spaces. After talking with stakeholders, these are ideals that would have a fundamental impact on their success in homeless programs and are still sought by the community. Exclusive resources are those that need to be kept separate between the homeless and the community. The shower, hygiene, restroom illustration is shared but separate because of precautions against potential child predators.



## STRATEGIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

*Drawing the Line*

**D**rawing the line takes a look at both the homeless and affordable housing situation in Atlanta through a precedent analysis. Some of these successful projects have already been completed in Atlanta, but need to be adopted in other areas of the city that require the same kind of assistance. Links are provided to learn more about the projects, but the main idea is to view what we have and what the potential could be in the future through creative problem solving.

**T**he series looks at the homeless situation in Atlanta before looking at the housing options. The initial image is a problem found with a dwelling space within the Atlanta City Limits. The additional images are examples that begin to show an alternative

look to housing that drive costs down. The organization of these images is as follows:

1. Tent structures | Tiny houses
2. Day shelter | Community Resource Centers
3. Zoning ADUs | Zoning Homeless - Zoning Affordability
4. IZ Apartments | Modular & Container Homes
5. Single Family | Smaller Dwelling & Half House

**I**n transitioning to the Cooper ST SW site analysis, these precedents provide alternative options and ideas.

### Tent City - Under I-20 West, Atlanta, GA



<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8214369/Tent-cities-appear-Atlanta-shelters-shutter-coronavirus-pandemic.html>

### Bridge Housing - San Jose, CA



[https://www.architectmagazine.com/project-gallery/bridge-housing-community\\_o](https://www.architectmagazine.com/project-gallery/bridge-housing-community_o)

### Tiny House Villages - Seattle, WA



<https://shelterforce.org/2019/03/15/tiny-house-villages-in-seattle-an-efficient-response-to-our-homelessness-crisis/> - 2nd Example <http://www.berncogov/community-services/tiny-home-village.aspx>



Peachtree Pine Shelter (Closed) - Atlanta, GA



<https://www.ajc.com/news/local-govt-politics/atlanta-peachtree-pine-homeless-shelter-close-its-doors-august/LCmlWpMSSlPw6m8kuyNWDL/>

Geraldine E. King Resource Center - Salt Lake City, UT



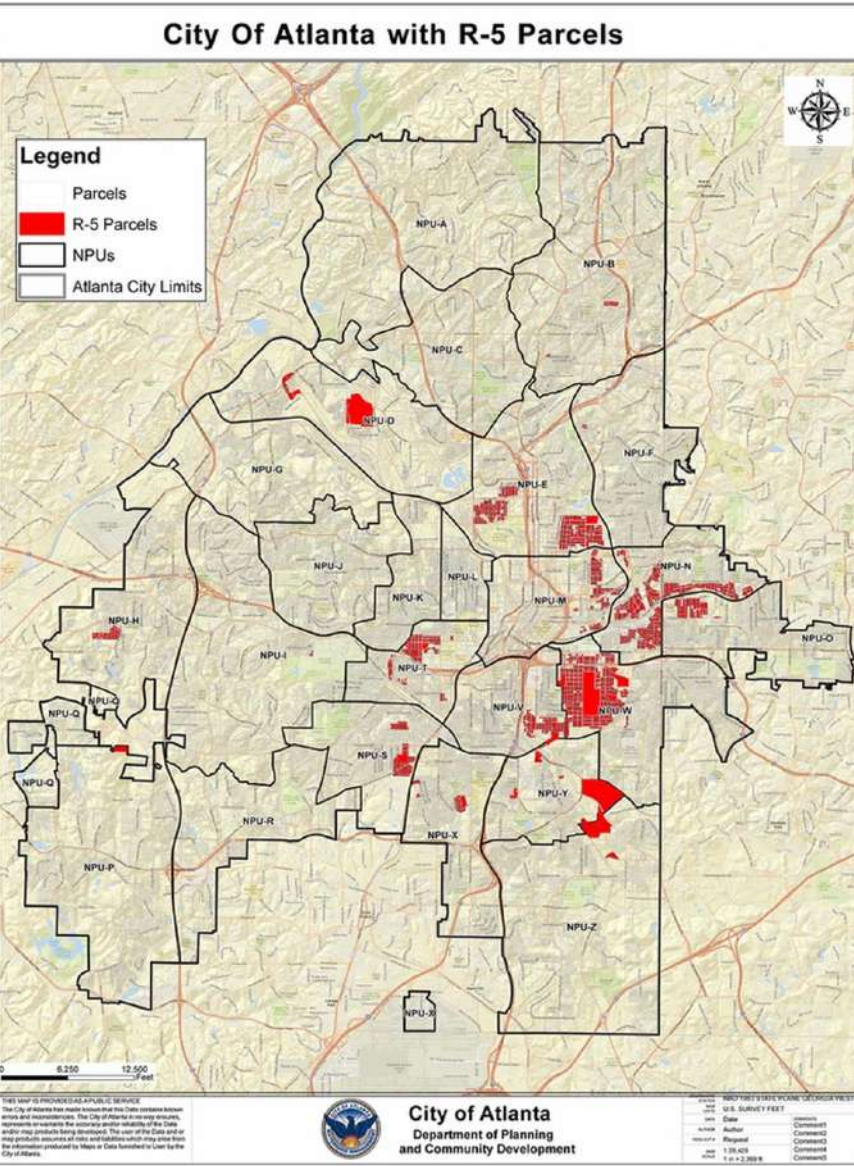
<https://ajcarchitects.com/portfolio/geraldine-e-king-resource-center/>  
<https://ajcarchitects.com/portfolio/gail-miller/>

@Promise Youth & Community Center - Atlanta, GA



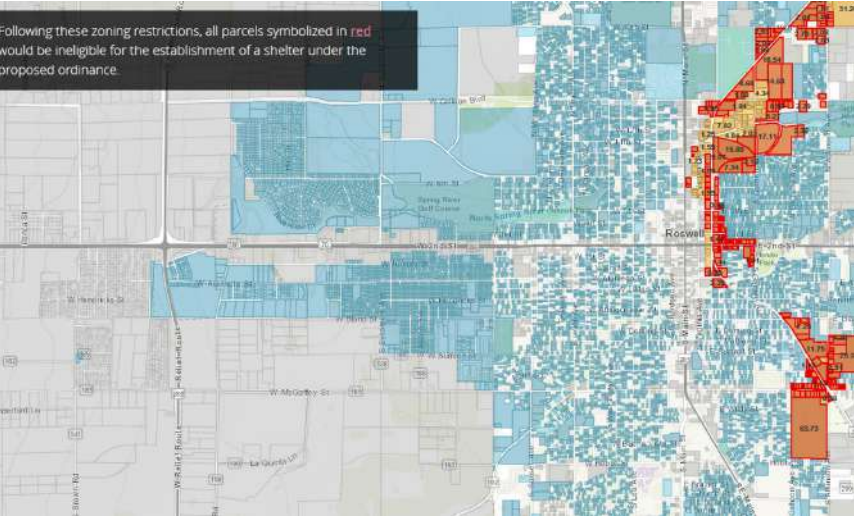
<http://www.carterusa.com/projects/at-promise-youth-and-community-center>

Zoning for ADU's - Atlanta, GA



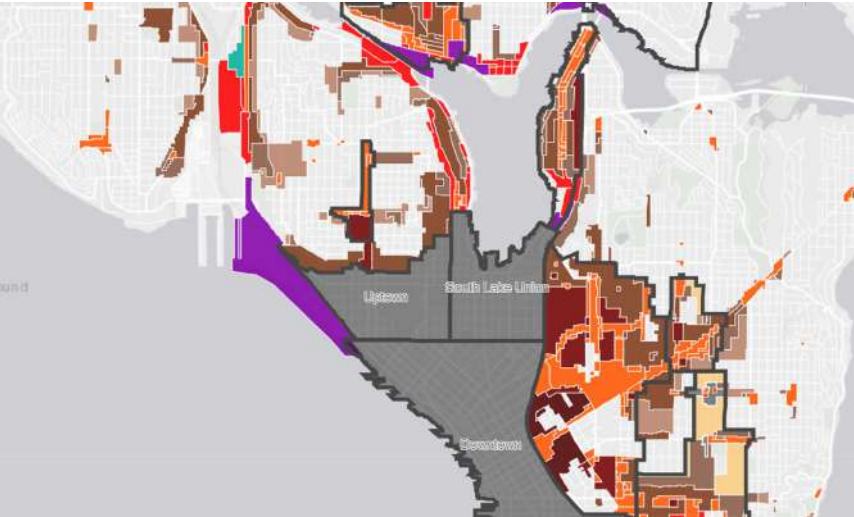
<https://www.kronbergua.com/post/adu-update-call-to-action>

Impact of Zoning Laws on Homeless - Roswell, NM



<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=c35b4bf6ba9f47a6beb334972ecd8d88>

Mandatory Housing Affordability - Seattle, WA



[https://www.seattle.gov/hala/about/mandatory-housing-affordability-\(mha\)](https://www.seattle.gov/hala/about/mandatory-housing-affordability-(mha))  
<http://seattlecitygis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=b0167cf4e63149e-3b891307a41a639e5>



"Affordable" Housing near Beltline - Atlanta, GA



<https://www.amli.com/apartments/atlanta/old-4th-ward-apartments/amli-old-4th-ward>

Modular Homes - Mitcham, London



<https://www.dezeen.com/2015/09/08/richard-rogers-prefabricated-housing-for-homeless-people-opens-in-south-london-mitcham-merton/>

Inhabiting Shipping Containers - Hope Gardens, London



<https://qz.com/1542887/london-provides-low-income-housing-in-modular-shipping-containers/>

Big House, Big Yard - Inman Park, Atlanta, GA



[https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/177-Elizabeth-St-NE-Atlanta-GA-30307/35843183\\_zpid/](https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/177-Elizabeth-St-NE-Atlanta-GA-30307/35843183_zpid/)

Smaller Dwellings (Cottage Village) - Clarkston, GA



<https://www.ajc.com/news/local/dekalb-city-approves-first-step-toward-new-neighborhood-cottage-homes/hxlpUC5GwKqFDUbSme8VHM/>

Half Houses - Chile



<https://www.archdaily.com/797779/half-a-house-builds-a-whole-community-elementals-controversial-social-housing>



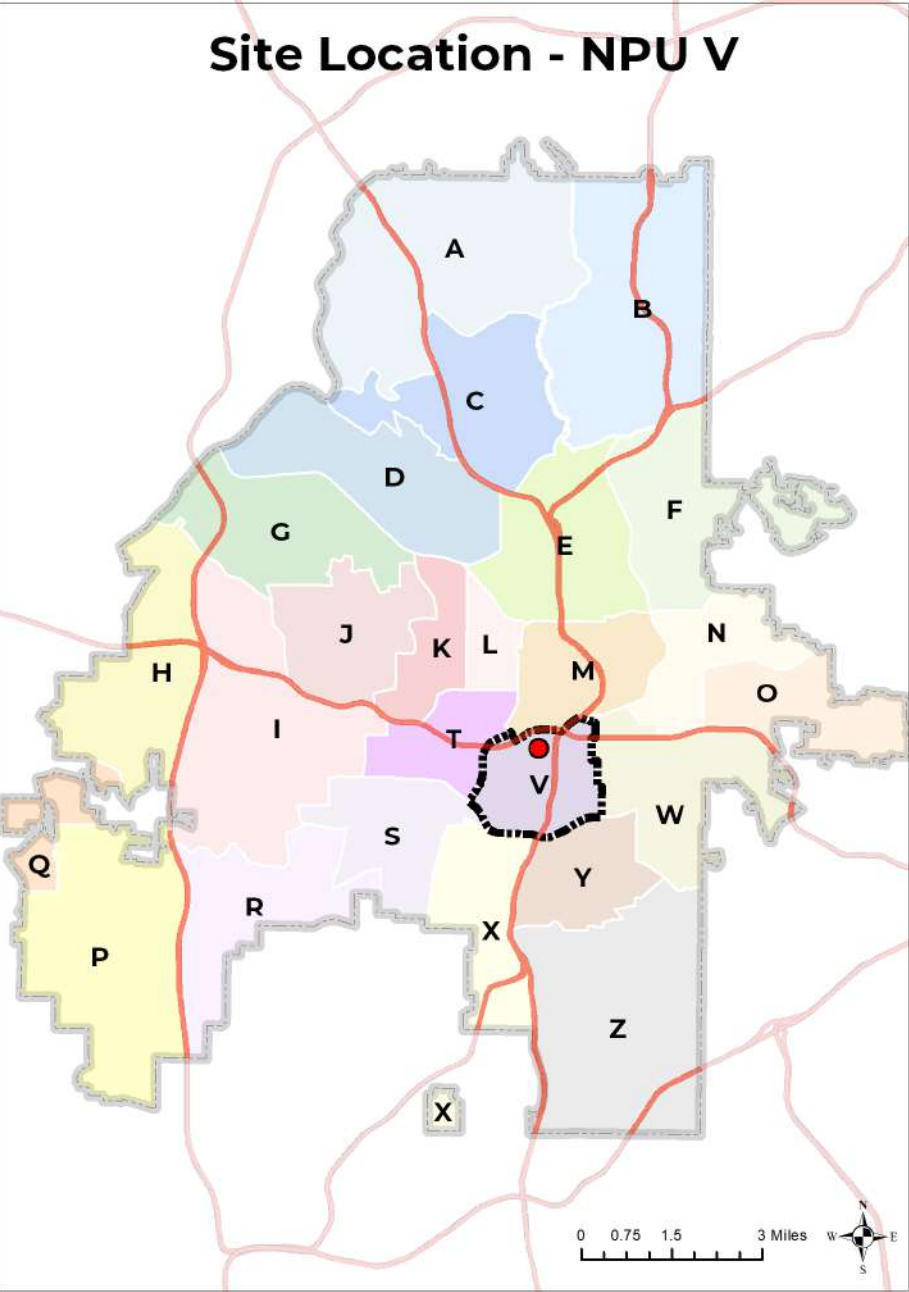
# COOPER STREET DESIGN PROPOSAL

## Background

The Cooper Street property is located southwest of the I-20 junction in Neighborhood Planning Unit V, Atlanta, GA. The neighborhood was brought to my initial attention by the Atlanta Public Schools Studio (APS Studio) led by Michael Dobbins, a professor at Georgia Tech. Their work will be consulted deciding a land use and needs assessment of the area. To find the studio’s work you can access their website at the following url: <http://pwp.gatech.edu/apsplanningstudio/examples/cooper-street/>.

The initial research put NPU V on the map for income equality, lack of higher educational obtainment, and proximity to I-20 West (Reference to page 15). APS Studio has identified additional criteria that help define the area and reinforce these statistics:

- Affordable Housing – the area has a stock of naturally occurring housing with three new multifamily properties having been built between 2009 and 2017 (APSS 2020). Other properties have remained affordable as a result of their age and deterioration ranking as Class C and F properties, which does not provide a good look for the area.
- Education – the closest elementary school and middle schools are at an overcapacity with utilization levels of 96% and 101%, respectively (APSS 2020). Matt Westmoreland identified how important schools are in getting families to live in an area, preferring more affluent neighborhoods to providing their children with a poorly rated school.
- I-20 West – the site has immediate access to the interstate, MARTA bus routes, and

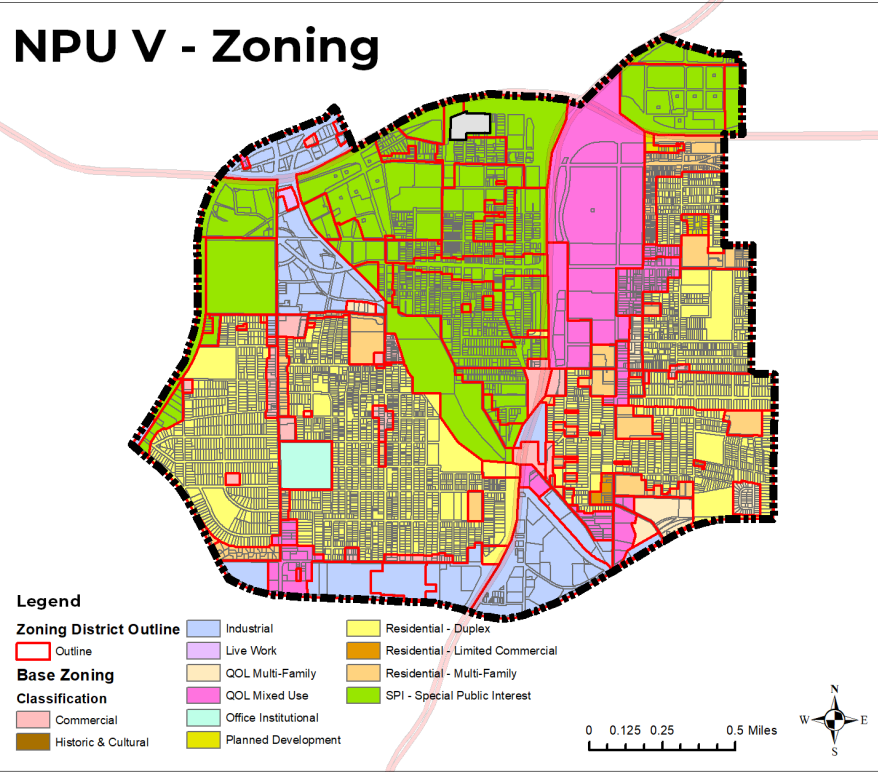


the Garnett Station. The studio sees this as an asset to APS because the need for vehicles would be less for people using the facility. The only problem with this assessment, the area is in a high poverty area which would deter people from wanting to travel on foot to a community center. Improving the safety of streets between the public transit areas could greatly impact the desirability of the property.

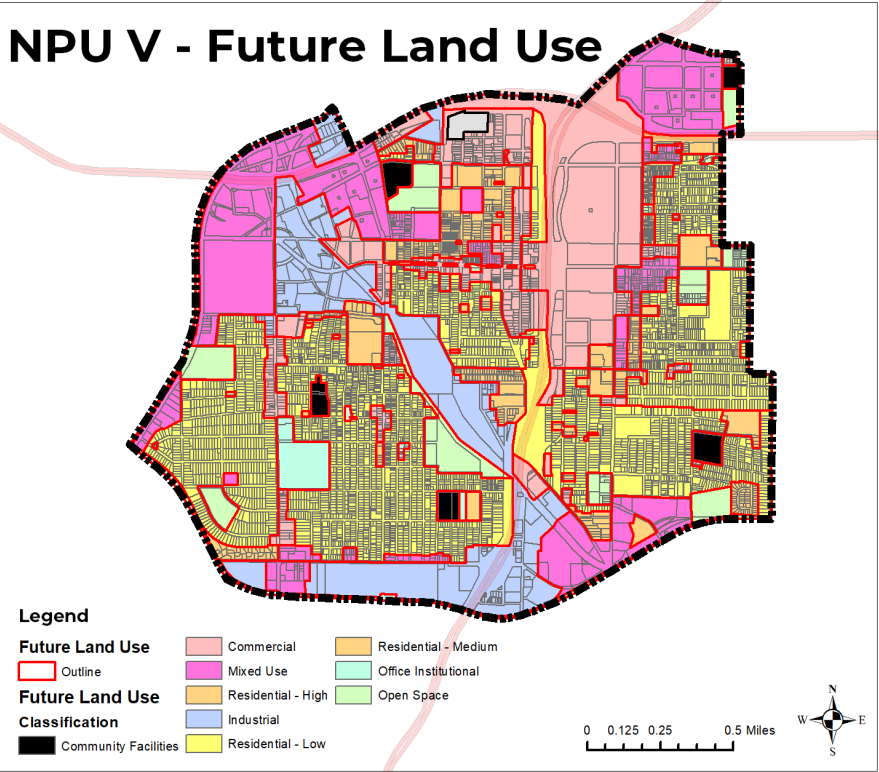
*“The local community would benefit from a health and wellness focused community center that services local students as well as the broader community.”*  
-APS Studio

The studio proposal is a great opportunity to have a tremendous impact on the surrounding neighborhoods. The following study will look at areas which can enhance their ideas in designing a community center that serves all stakeholders in the area. Through the combination of APS studio research and personal familiarity of the area from volunteering and conducting interviews. The final product will **reimagine** what it means to live as a community.

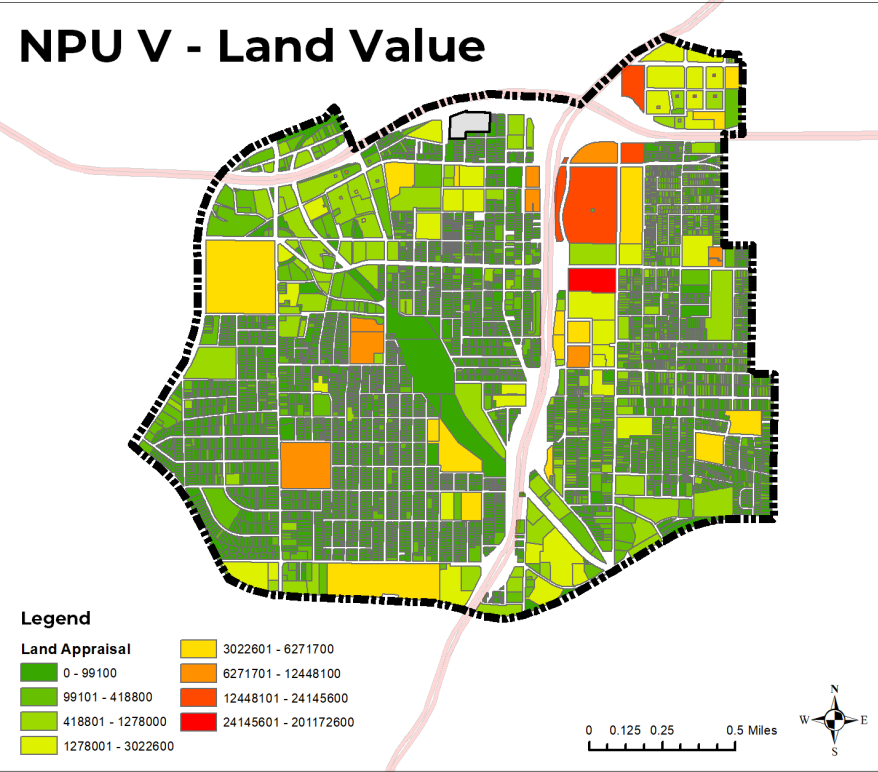




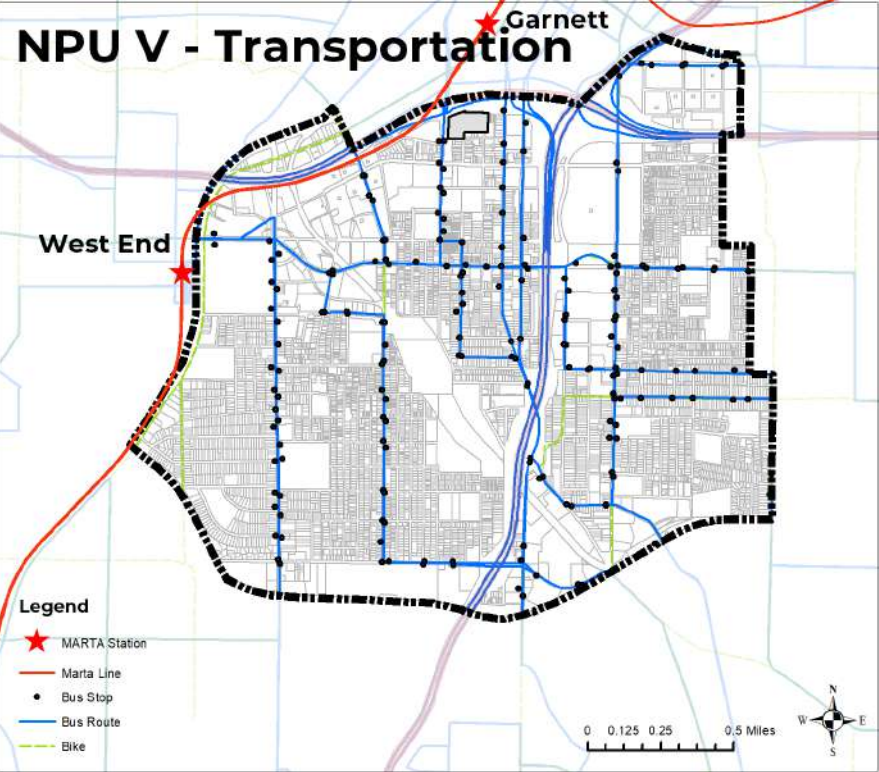
Above is the current zoning situation in NPU V. In the map series, the site for Cooper Street is outlined in black with a grey fill. Looking at the NPU in general, there is largely residential zoning (yellow), parts that are mixed use (pink), a good amount of industry (blue), and quite a bit of special public interest zoning (green) which has a variety of incentives and restrictions. Looking towards the future, one large change is the expansion of the mixed-use/commercial into parts near the highway which is where our site occupies. APS Studio notes, the site is currently zoned as SPI-18 SA1 Mechanicsville Neighborhood Special Public Interest District with



RG-3. They also mention the undeveloped land adjacent the parcel owned by Fulton County. Combining these two parcels is essential in having a catalytic development. The future land use map should maintain a community corridor along Windsor ST SW which would bring in traffic to support the commercial being suggested. More importantly, developing Windsor Street into a main street project can help bring in investors and make the street less dangerous between the community facility and Garnett MARTA station. There are several homeless encampments along this road that discourage foot traffic.



The studio notes the land value of the parcel is currently appraised at \$331,100. Looking at the land value map, the relative land value of the entire area near I-20 is affordable for a large scale development project. If public money were to drive the investment in the property they would look for reasons to create interest with other philanthropic and private investments. Affordable land and transportation mobility would provide an incentive to begin with the initial proposed parcel as an incremental development that expands into something much larger down the road.



The property is within a half-mile of the Garnett MARTA station and has ease of access to the bus system. Where it lacks is in walkability and bicycle routes within the area. Improving streets and designating bike/share lanes will help improve the interconnectivity between the neighborhoods.



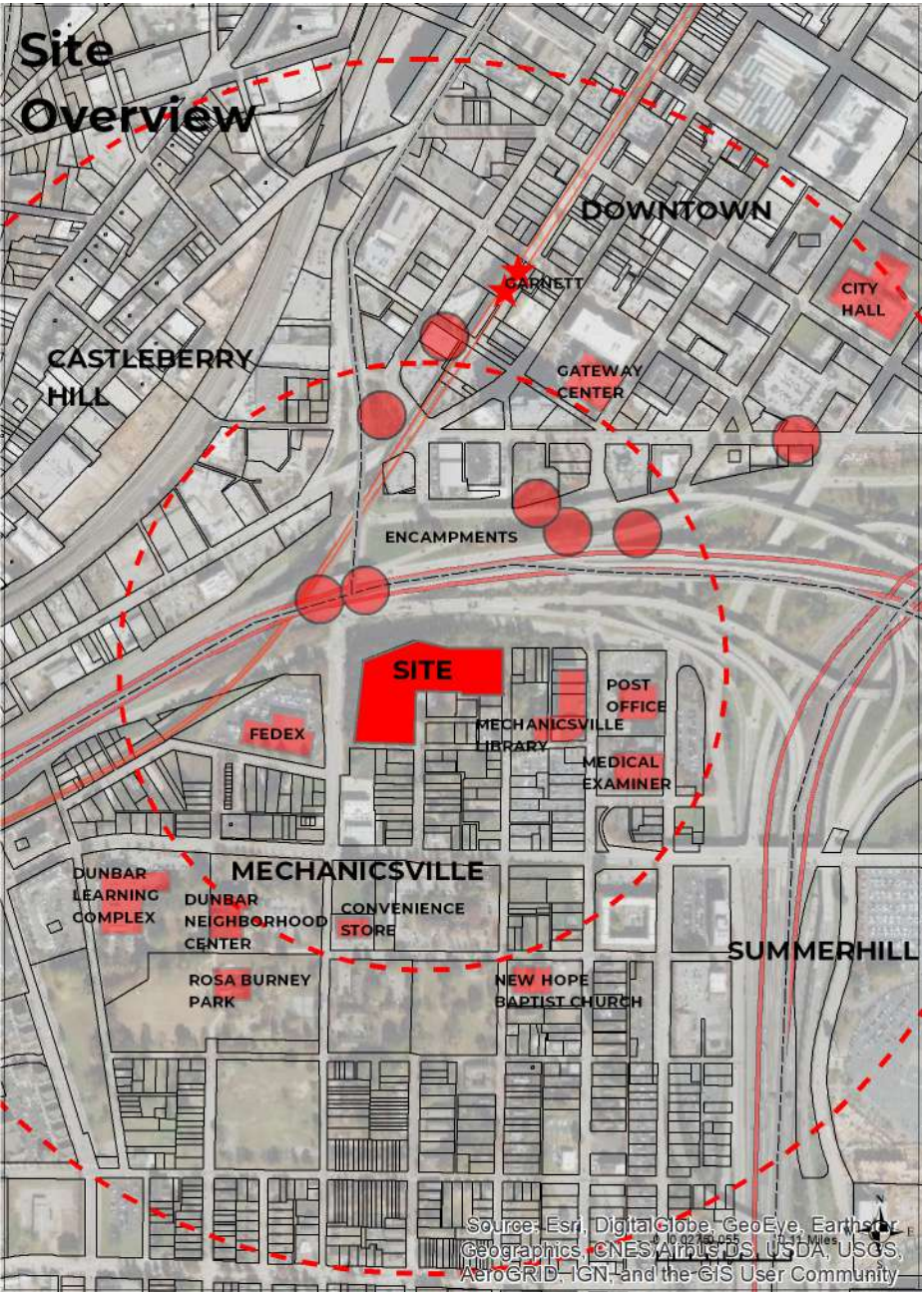
# COOPER STREET DESIGN PROPOSAL

## Site Analysis

Cooper Street has been at the center of the entire data collection process of this paper by being in proximity to the majority of observations and volunteering work. This relationship can be seen in the adjacent site overview. The red circles are the same impact areas from the Point in Time 2020 study, the Gateway Center is noted, and proximity to City Hall are all key in where interviews and encampments were documented. The rings represent a quarter and half mile distance from the site center point. The neighborhoods the site would directly serve include: Mechanicsville, Castleberry Hill, Summerhill, and Downtown by proximity.

Atlanta has @Promise, it has the Dunbar Education Center (Seen in the site overview), and several

other facilities planned that target the youth populations in the area. The youth are the future generation of Atlanta, but consequently, the adults are neglected opportunities to improve their education. This education can be at a fundamental level, but it can also include financial empowerment, job training, and other means of improving one's knowledge to achieve more stability in life. Finding opportunities to train adults, who set the example for their children, can provide an improved effect on all. More importantly, creating a facility that combines the learning experience and physical education for both parties to participate in activities together, makes the process of improving ourselves more enjoyable.



In addition, there is a lack of fresh and healthy food options in the area, noting only one convenience store within a quarter mile of the site. How can we begin to grow vegetables, train people to garden, and learn how to use healthy foods in their kitchens in a highly contaminated soil city? Below is a look at the impervious surfaces we typically see in an urban environment. Runoff from cars pollute our water systems and air quality. How can this new community facility change tradition?



INTERSECTION OF WINDSOR ST SW AND I20 EAST RAMP LOOKING AT SITE PERIMETER

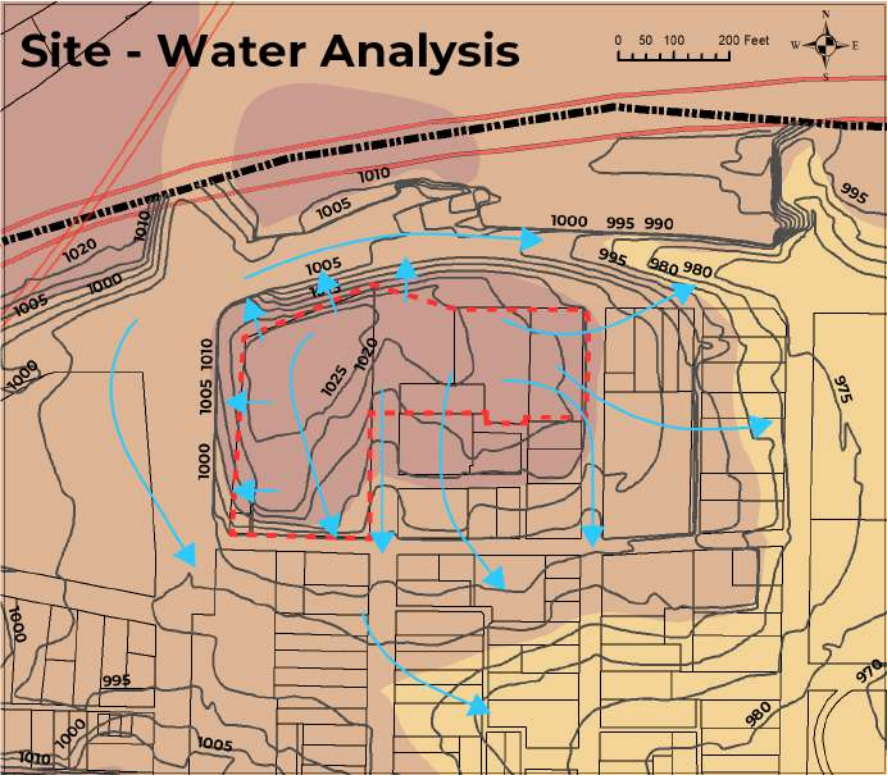


COOPER ST SW ENTERING SITE

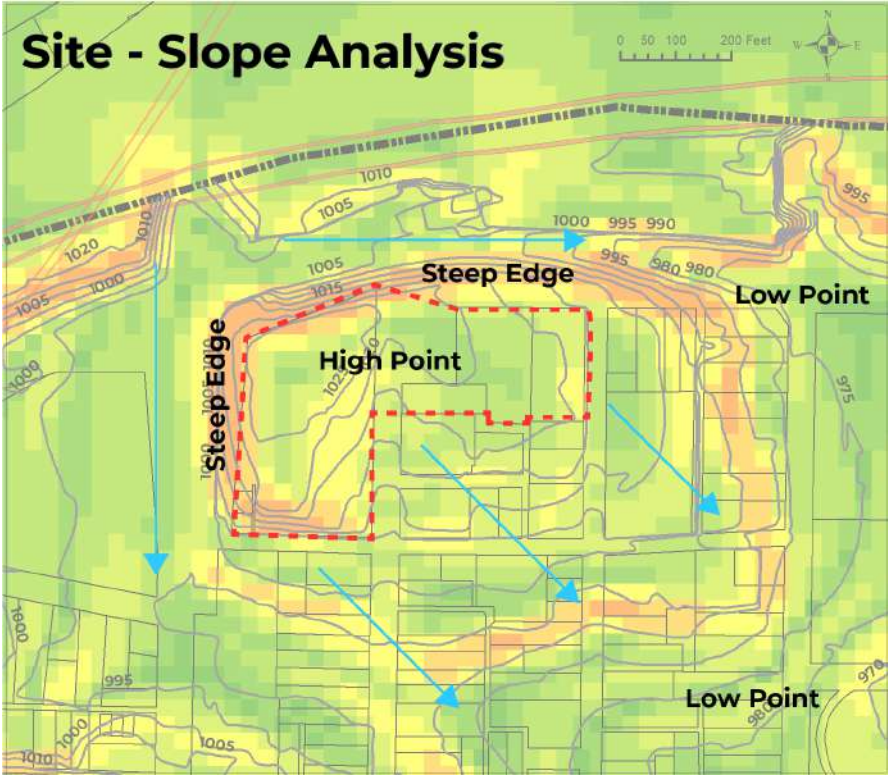


COOPER ST SW END OF CUL-DU-SEC

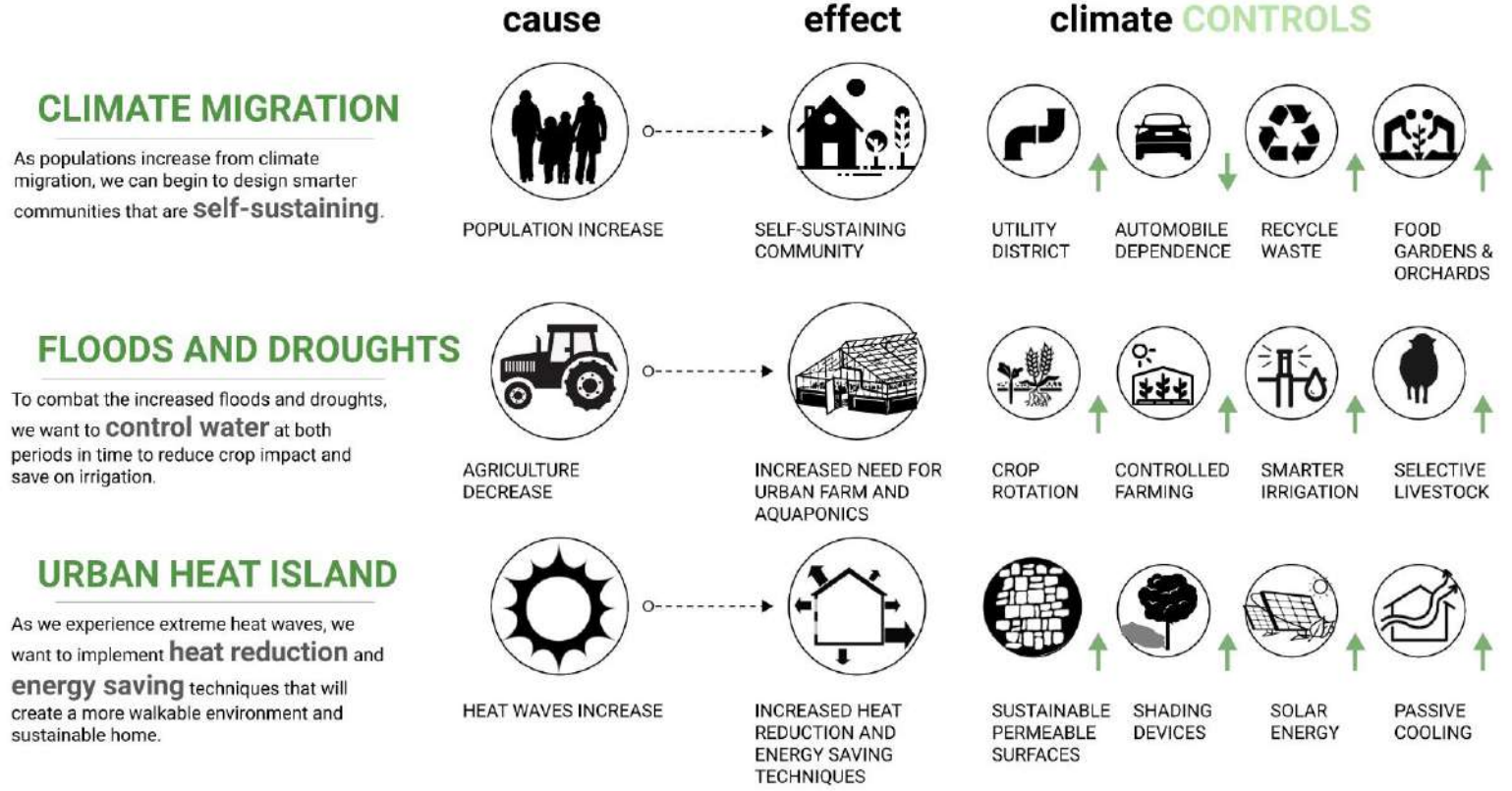




The site is on a higher elevation meaning any development we create will have runoff to adjacent properties. Considering how water is moving on the property is our first step in preventing this kind of continual contamination. There are ways for us to contain the water on the site with cisterns that collect clean roof water before it reaches an asphalt surface. In addition, there are ways for us to clean the water and allow that water to permeate back into the earth before it is lost on another property. Taking precautions to the vegetation and organization of green spaces around the site can help our water situation and improve the quality of life for the area.



Atlanta is already experiencing the effects of climate change, but as temperatures continue to rise, the problems we face will amplify. Every half-degree change in temperature effects millions of lives. The one climate effect we mostly recognize is the Urban Heat Island, as result of the concrete jungle we have created with asphalt surfaces. 'Hotlanta' has made moves to contain this issue with our tree policy and other ordinances, but the issue will persist as long as we continue to be automobile oriented. Floods and droughts are areas that people are not as concerned with until their car gets stuck on a poorly drained street. However, in the



rural areas surrounding our MSA are farmers that are losing their crops from heat waves and extreme floods that wash away their crop. They provide the food in our local markets and without their business the prices will rise creating a new affordability issue. If we begin to struggle with our food supply, how are we going to feed a bunch of hungry mouths from the South? Climate migration is a serious concern for people in areas where sea-levels are rising at rapid rates. There is no measure we can put in place to stop Miami from going under water within thirty years. In those years as people become displaced, Atlanta is a prime destination for living. With the

population increase will be a demand for new development putting pressures on our utilities, food supply, and transportation network. How can we create a self-sustaining community that installs climate controls to preserve a brighter future for Atlanta?



## COOPER STREET DESIGN PROPOSAL

*Proposal - ImagineATL*

ImagineATL is a beacon of hope for all of Atlanta that we can come together as a community and solve our problems through acts of human kindness. The facility functions as a place for youth, adults, and homeless populations to share essential resources.

In recognizing the anonymity concerns of homeless individuals, the building maintains privacy in the residencies on the northeast site that gradually becomes more public in a counterclockwise manner around the facility. This design aims to reduce the barriers that homeless people face on a daily basis by being stereotyped for their current situation.

The Imagine Village (resident space) is an alternative to the tent encampments that are created underneath the interstate

highway. The cabins take up minimum space while maximizing functionality to drive down costs. While remaining affordable, the architecture is not sacrificed in the quality of each structure. Costs are further driven down by creating communal restroom and secure

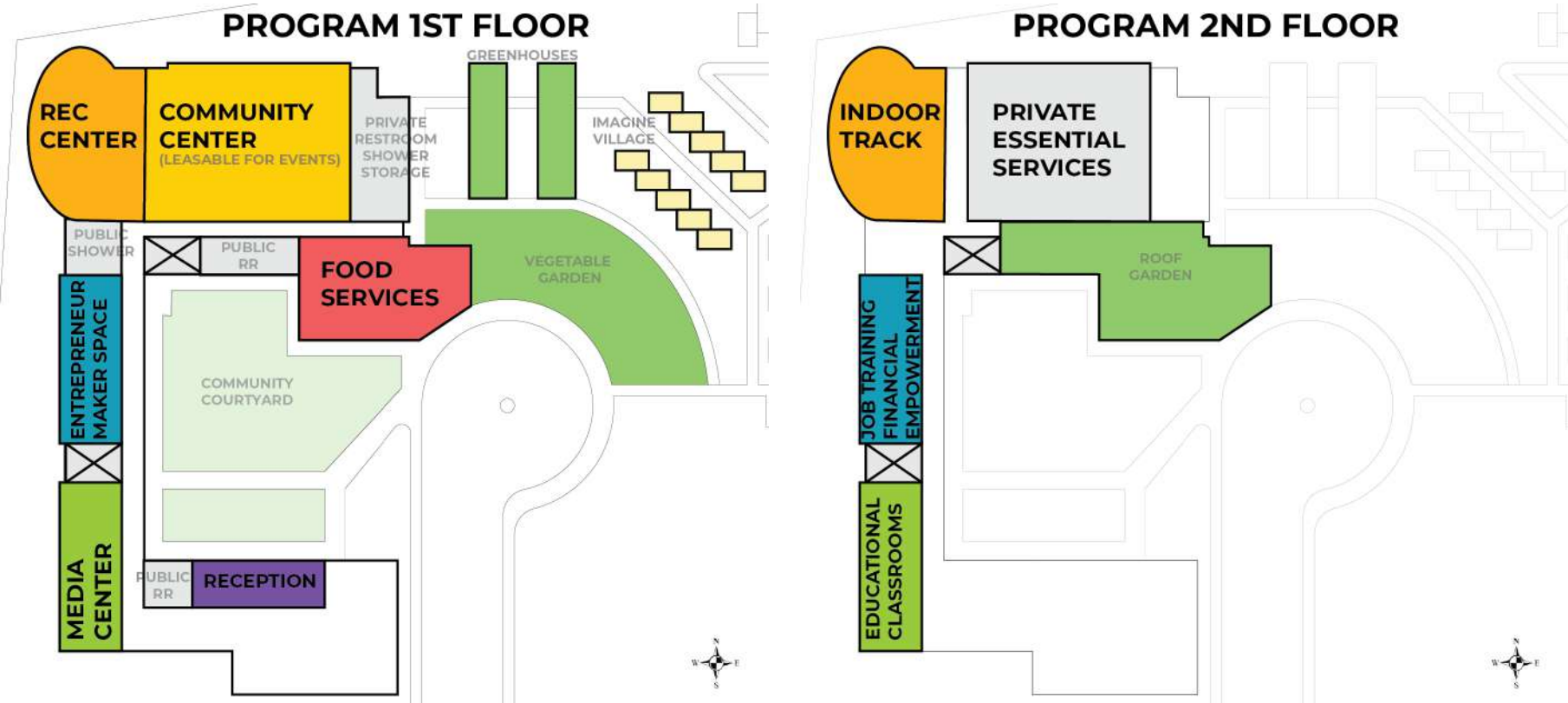
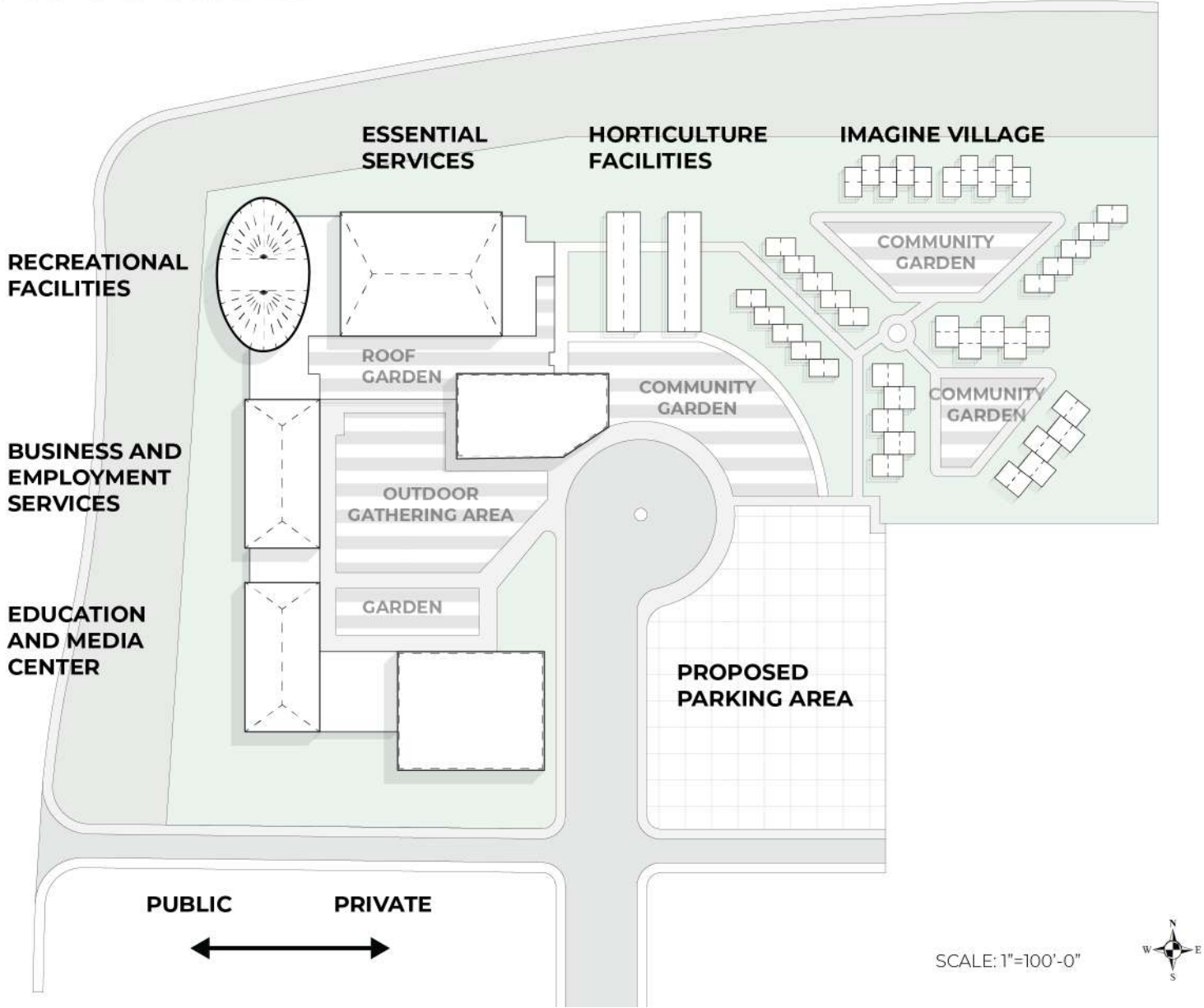
*“Imagine no possessions, I wonder if you can?  
No need for greed or hunger, a brotherhood of man.  
Imagine all the people, sharing all the world”  
-Yoko Ono & John Lennon*

storage within the community building that will remain under 24/7 surveillance. There are garden spaces integrated within the village as a means of improving mental health and to allow individuals to feel like they themselves





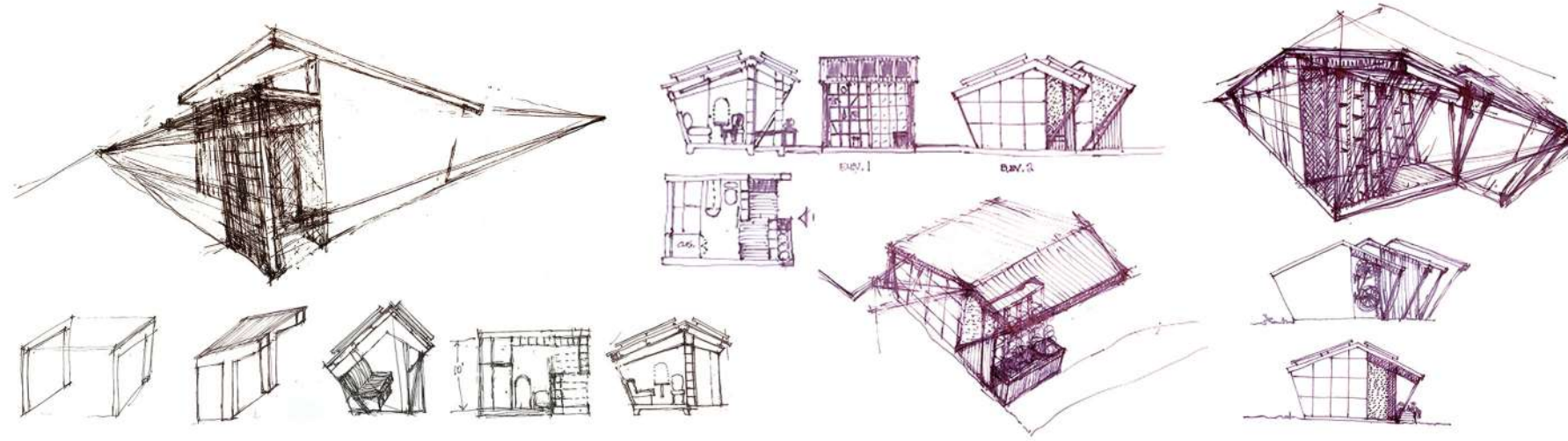
SITE ROOF OVERVIEW



can become self-sufficient. There are three client work opportunities within the community facility which include: horticulture, kitchen, and maintenance services. The residencies will not act as transitional shelters; opposes the stair case model (Reference to Pg. 56) where clients are then referred to another facility. The residencies will be a permanent housing community that nurtures clients to the point that they can become independent with no time limit. The design currently calls for 40 total units composed of 25 single occupancy and 15 double occupancy units.

In addition, there are essential services (Reference pg. 59) provided to the community and clients on the second floor of the facility. Exclusive services for homeless individuals are provided on the second floor of the community center where client management will be conducted. The first-floor space of the community center will remain for leasable events, but can also act as a warming shelter during periods of time where there is an increased demand for beds. The food services will integrate healthy options provided by the vegetable garden and greenhouses. Food services offers training to clients and the public.

## IMAGINE CABINS PROTOTYPES

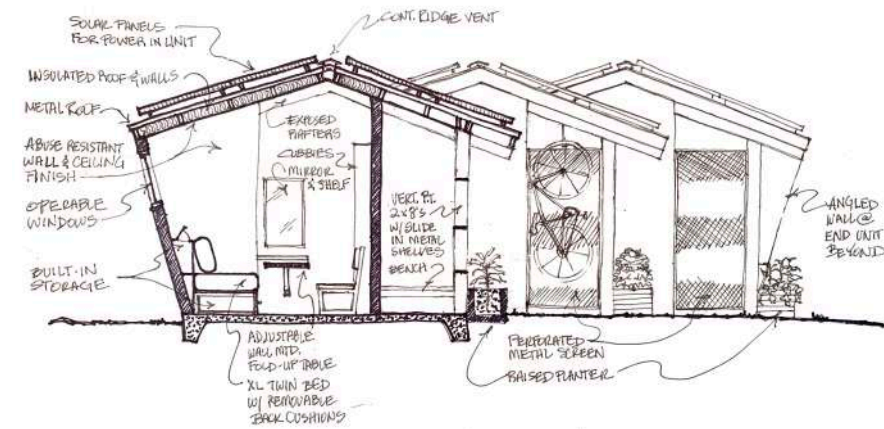


The cabins are single or double occupancy residences that range in size from 104 sq.ft. to 156 sq.ft.

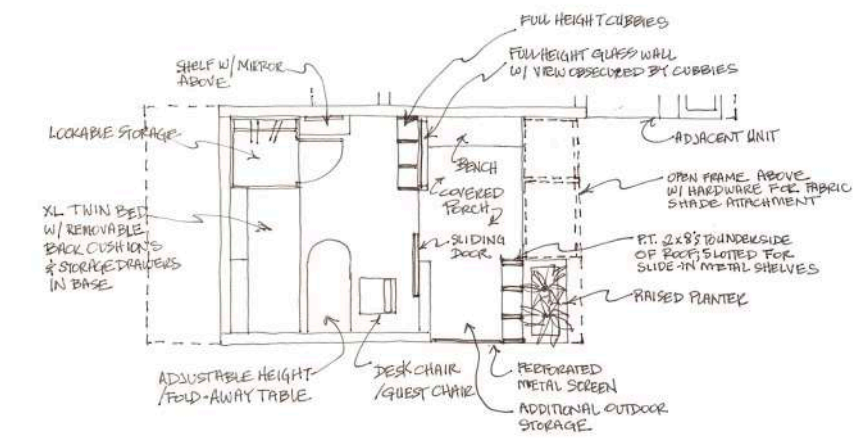
They are designed with walls that angle out at 15 degrees to provide a greater volume of space in a smaller footprint. The cabins are similar to the “Tiny Homes” which have become popular among people looking to down size, cut costs, and live more simply (Reference PG. 61). The cabins are equipped with various built-in storage elements, a bed that doubles as a sofa, and adjustable, fold-away table. A step ladder provides access to a second level of storage that utilizes the space between the top of the lockable storage closet and the bottom of the vaulted ceiling. To provide even more flexibility, a full-size bunk bed can be added above the twin size bed in both the single and double occupancy units to accommodate a family if the need arises. The cabins provide security for the residents and their belongings inside the well-insulated units as well as additional storage outside under roof adjacent to the entry door. The units are heated and ventilated with electrical power, LED lighting and Wi-Fi access, but residents must take a short walk to the Community Center for restrooms and showers. Solar panels on the roof will generate enough electricity to power the cabin’s lights. An operable window above the bed provides natural light and it can be opened for ventilation. The entry door is set in a frame with glass transoms above and a large full height sidelite with obscure glass located behind the interior storage cubbies. These elements also allow natural light into the space without compromising the resident’s sense of security.

## IMAGINE VILLAGE SINGLE UNITS

### SINGLE OCCUPANCY



SECTION

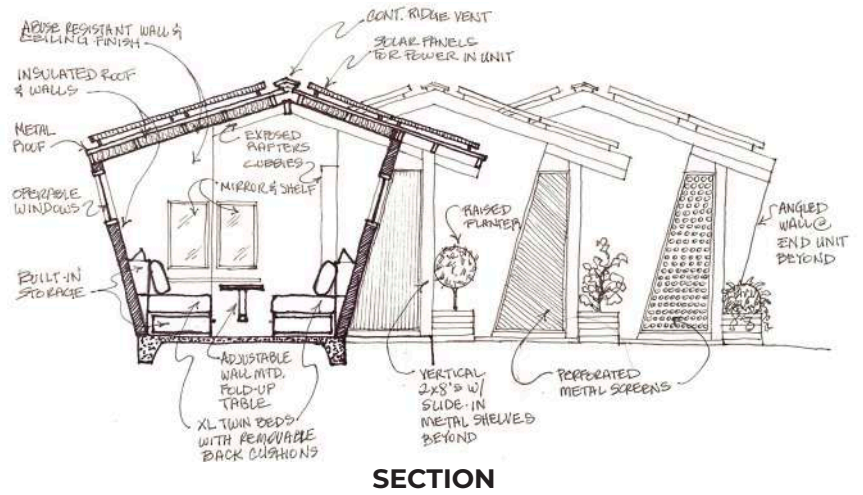


PLAN - 106 SQ FT UNIT

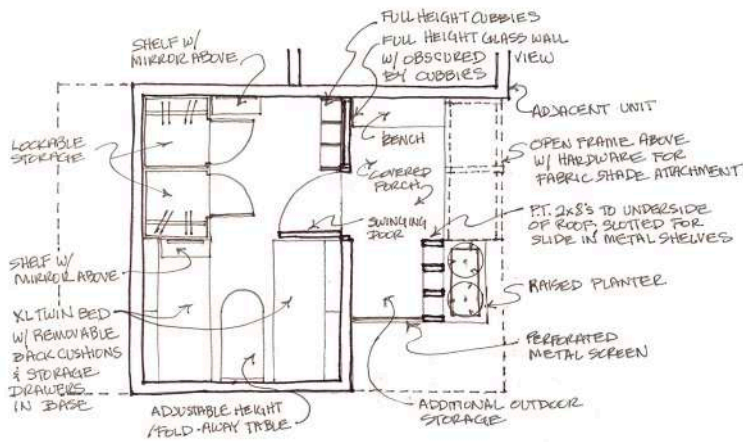


IMAGINE VILLAGE  
DOUBLE UNITS

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY



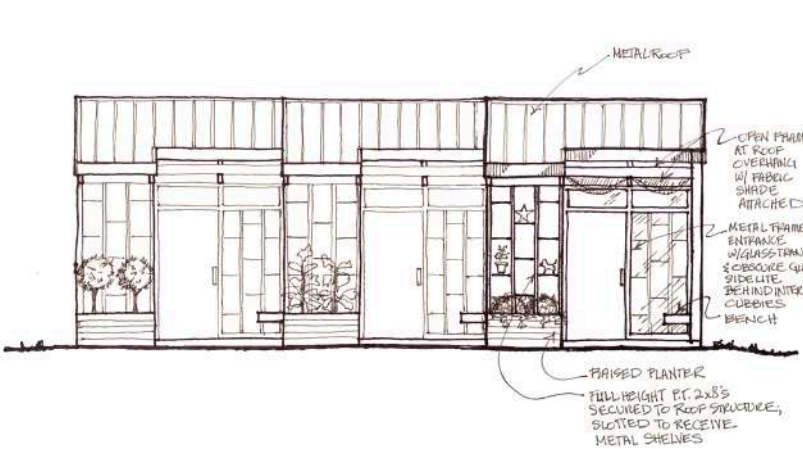
SECTION



PLAN - 148 SQ FT UNIT

IMAGINE VILLAGE  
SINGLE AND DOUBLE UNITS

SINGLE OCCUPANCY



ELEVATION

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY



ELEVATION

Regardless of the resident's length of stay, the cabins are designed to help them achieve a feeling of pride in ownership and respect by providing the opportunity to make the space uniquely theirs. When they move in the resident can choose from various shapes and colors of fabric shade devices that they can hang in one several different configurations from the open framing at the roof above their cabin's entrance. The residents can further personalize their unit as they would any home by planting flowers, vegetables, etc. in the raised planter outside the front porch. They also have exterior cubbies created with pressure treated 2x8 lumber that extends up to the roof structure that are slotted to receive metal plate shelves in any configuration the resident wants to design to hold special items they have collected and wish to display to make the space uniquely theirs. Each unit also has a built-in bench on the front porch so residents can relax outside or invite other residents over for outdoor socializing which can spill over into the common green space they all share in Imagine Village.

*"A fair world without homelessness, with  
head and heart, together"*  
*—Juha Kaakinen, Y Foundation*

## PART TWO CONCLUSION

*Creative Problem Solving*

Part Two begins by comparing the US and European models of homeless prevention to a more successful approach presented by Juha Kaakinen and the Y Foundation. The Housing First policy employed by the Y Foundation in Finland skips to the end step of referring someone to permanent housing by simply providing them permanent housing from the onset. The Finnish government is organized in a way that they can use public grants and private funds to acquire flats to be converted to affordable housing units to the homeless. The homeless client is immediately housed before any supportive services are

introduced, without question. The paper then looks at the supporting services to find the essential needs that could be provided to both the general public and a homeless individual. Drawing the line is a visual precedent analysis of creative problem solving that addresses homelessness, zoning, and affordability. DTL compares these solutions to situations in the Atlanta area to intentionally be provocative before

*"The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and cruelty by the  
bad people but the silence over that by the good people."*  
*—Martin Luther King, Jr.*

introducing the Cooper Street Design Proposal.

Cooper Street Design Proposal illustrates a background for the site at the regional level through a GIS mapping analysis of NPUV and a research foundation presented by the Atlanta Public Schools Studio. The proposal then looks at the site analysis which takes the observer more into the local situation surrounding the site. This reveals how the site relates to the rest of the paper and addresses the need to consider climate change as an integral part of design. The final product is ImagineATL, a creative solution to a multifaceted problem.

## ImagineATL

### 1. MODEL

- HOUSING FIRST MODEL (FINLAND) (PG.57)
- COMMUNITY FACILITY PROVIDING ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO PUBLIC AND HOMELESS (PG.59)
- 40 UNITS OF IMMEDIATE HOUSING WITH LOW BARRIERS (PG.78)
- PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND NON-PROFIT PARTNERSHIP

### 2. PROGRAM

- JOB TRAINING, FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT, MAKER SPACES
- MEDIA CENTER, EDUCATIONAL CLASSROOMS
- HORTICULTURE TRAINING, GARDEN THERAPY, GREENHOUSE
- FOOD SERVICE AND CHEF TRAINING, MEAL PREPARATION
- COMMUNITY CENTER EVENT SPACE
- RECREATION SPACE WITH INDOOR TRACK
- 24/7 SECURITY MONITORING
- SHOWERS, STORAGE, LAUNDRY, WORSHIP
- ESSENTIAL SERVICE AND CLIENT MANAGEMENT

### 3. DESIGN

- URBAN FARMING
- CLIMATE CONTROLS (PG. 73)
- WATER CAPTURING CISTERNS AND WATER CLEANING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
- PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SPACES (PG. 76)



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1.

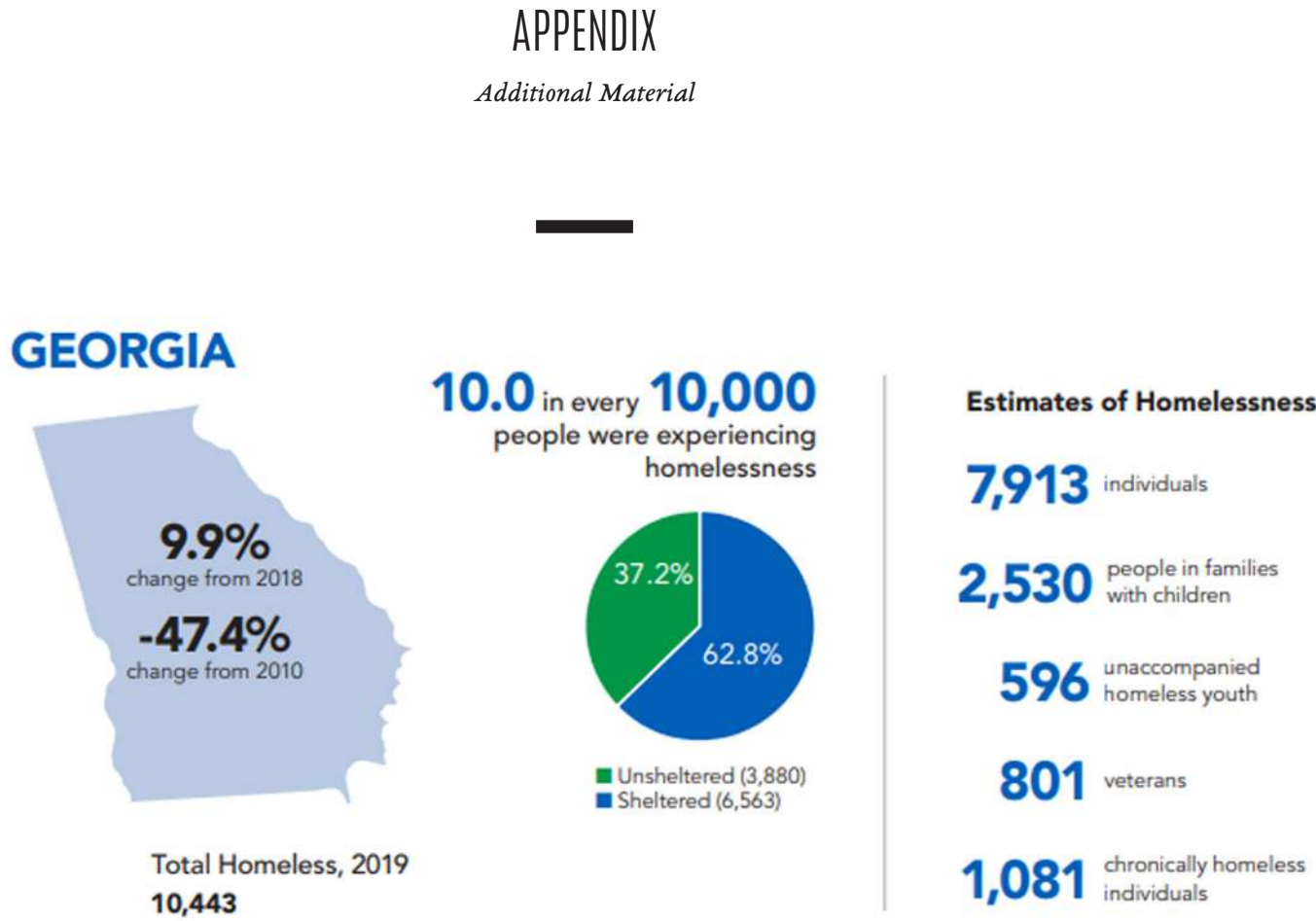


Figure 1 - Data from the 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR)

2.

POINT IN TIME 2019	SHELTERED		UNSHelterED	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
	Emergency	Transitional			
TOTAL POPULATION	1656	842	719	3217	
Chronic Total	183	0	193	376	11.7%
Youth Total (Unaccompanied-+Parenting)	118	52	19	189	5.9%
Family Total	405	92	2	499	15.5%
Veteran Total	145	127	77	349	10.8%
AGE					
Under age 18	256	61	1	318	9.9%
18-24	114	54	19	187	5.8%
Over age 24	1286	727	699	2712	84.3%
GENDER					
Female	526	185	120	831	25.8%
Male	1114	656	588	2358	73.3%
Transgender	15	1	7	23	0.7%
Other	1	0	4	5	0.2%
ETHNICITY					
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	1571	817	684	3072	95.5%
Hispanic/Latino	85	25	35	145	4.5%
RACE					
White	158	82	71	311	9.7%
African American	1439	733	592	2764	85.9%
Asian	6	1	1	8	0.2%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	13	7	17	37	1.2%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	1	2	4	0.1%
Multiple Races	39	18	36	93	2.9%

Figure 2 - Data from the PIT Count 2019 - Partners for Home



3.

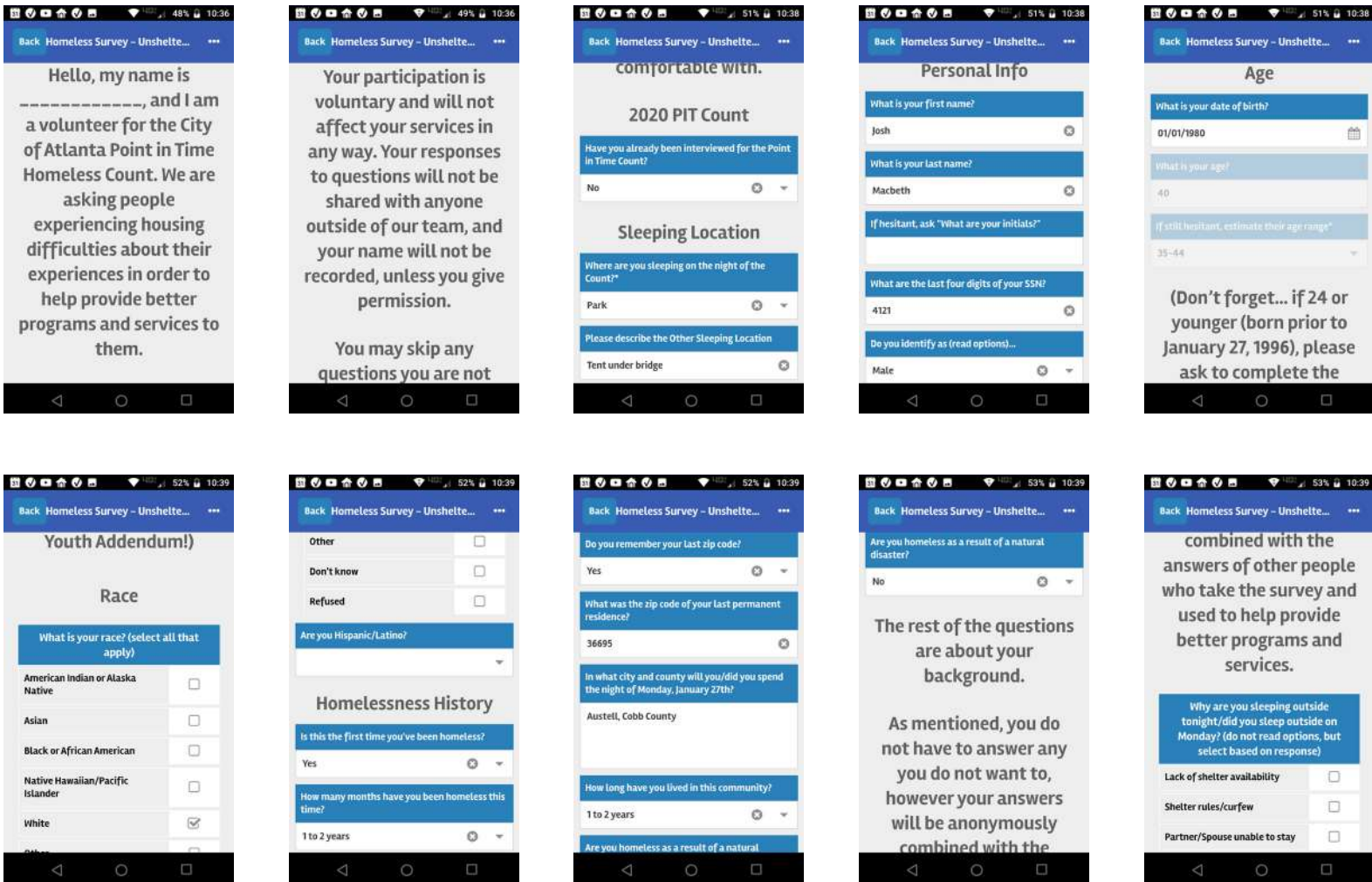
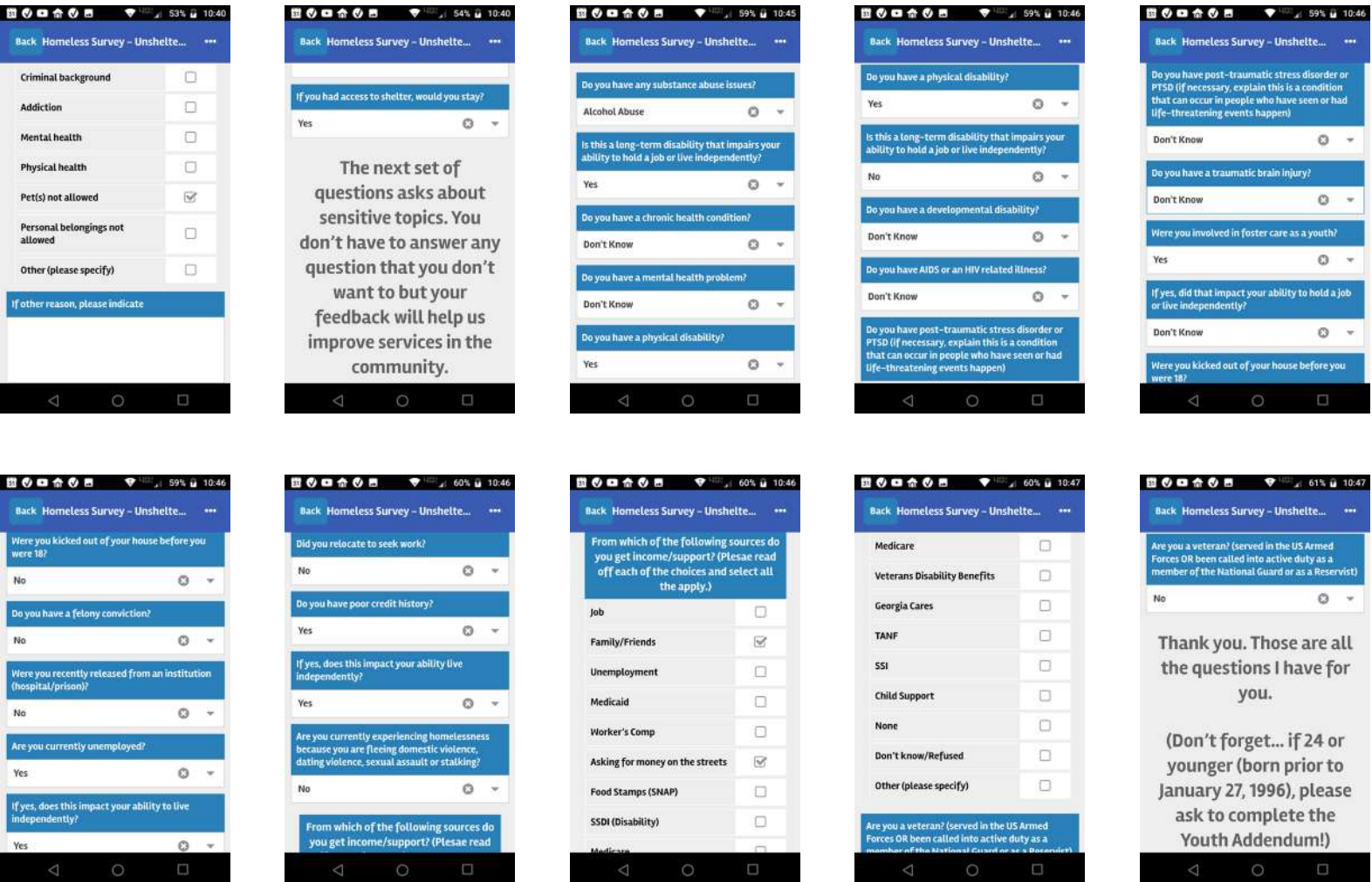
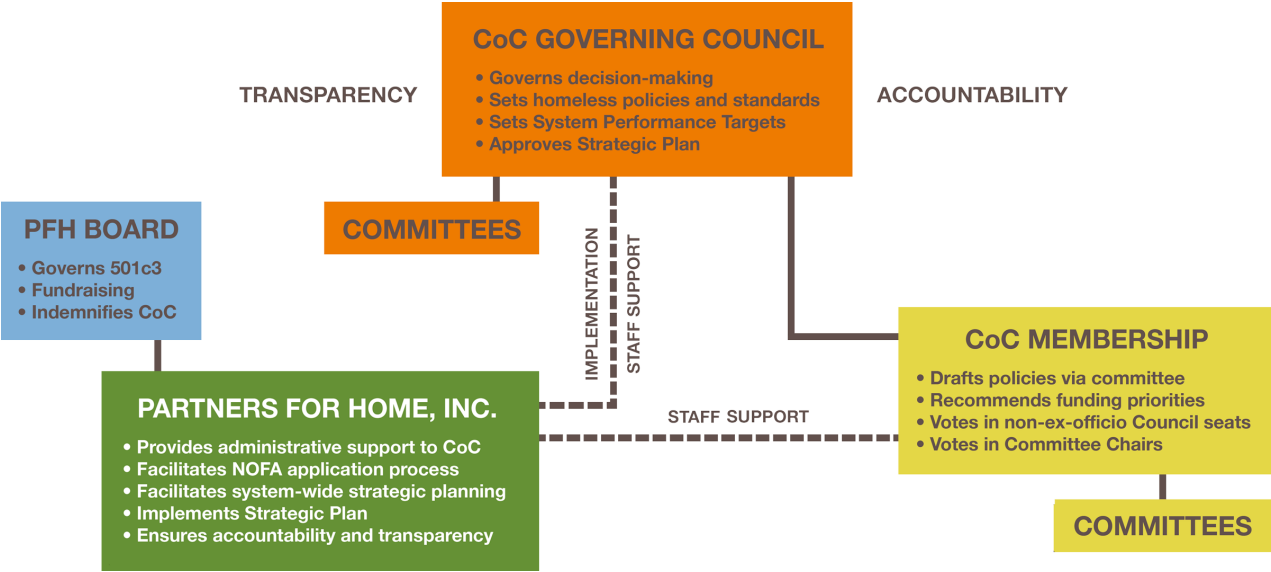


Figure 3 - Count Us Application Screen shots from phone

3.



4.



<https://partnersforhome.org/about/>

Figure 4 - Diagram of how Partners for Home operates

5.

	CRISIS RESPONSE				PERMANENT SOLUTIONS	
	SUPPORT SERVICES ONLY	OUTREACH	EMERGENCY SHELTER	TRANSITIONAL HOUSING	RAPID REHOUSING	SUPPORTIVE HOUSING
DEFINITION	Immediate relief	Immediate relief	Temporary shelter	Temporary therapeutic residence	Short- to medium-term rent subsidy	Long-term rent subsidy for chronically homeless
WHAT IS FUNDED?	Basic needs/social services	Critical housing/services	Short-term placement in a shelter	Intensive services for up to 2 years	Rent + Services	Rent + Services
CURRENT INVESTMENT	21%	4%	23%	26%	3%	19%

[https://partnersforhome.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Partners-for-HOME-Strategic-Plan-Brochure\\_FINAL.pdf](https://partnersforhome.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Partners-for-HOME-Strategic-Plan-Brochure_FINAL.pdf)

Figure 5 - Diagram of Partners for Home funding organization